

HOLY MOSES!

Your new denim commandments

(Honour thy bum and thighs)

HE DOES WHAT?!

THINGS HOT MEN DO WHEN NO ONE'S LOOKING

FRIENDS OVER?

The £10 dinner party top chefs serve up



BAD DAY OR BURNOUT? P140 will be the judge of that

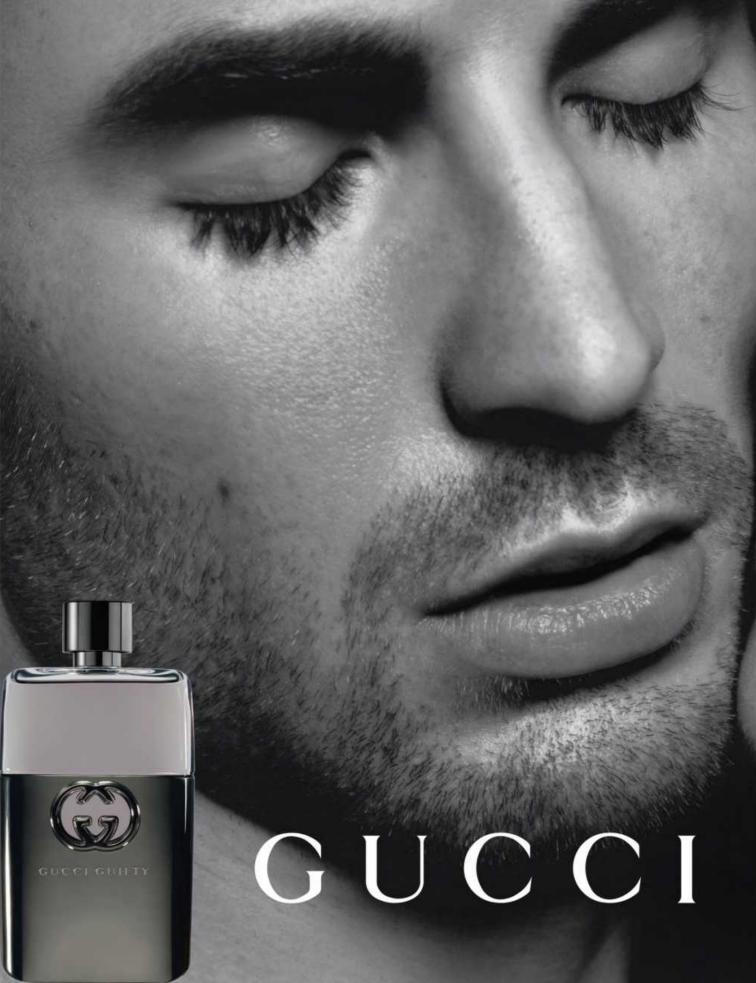
JANUARY 2016

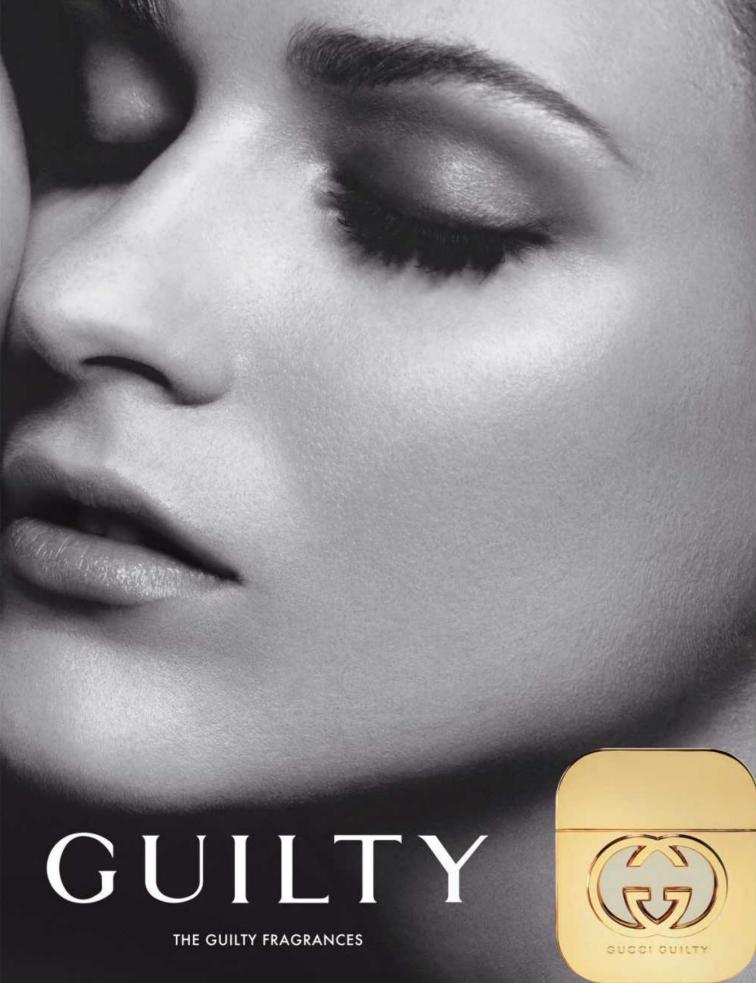
Meet the product all beauty editors put on their skin

Why you should sleep with a woman this party season



Rebel Wilson photographed by Frederic Auerbach









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HOTOGRAPHS FREDERIC AUERBACH, STYLIST ELIZABETH STEWART AT THEWALLGROUPCOM, STYLISTS ASSISTANT JENNY BRUNT. ARR LORENDO MARTIN AT THEWALLGROUPCOM, MARCH MATTHEW WUNKLEUWEN AT STRAWORKSGROUPCOM. NAILS BARBARA JANNERS AT ZET EETING ACERCYOLO A DEDEL MALADS AT SUIDT SYIDT DOTAL DEDEL MAIL SOM FOR JADOBID.



RANDOM QUESTION OF THE MONTH What's been your worst New Year's Eve?



Doing a round of impromptu break-dancing in front of a crowd of horrified party-goers

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Deciding to chill in PJs – my housemate forgot to mention the party until our doorbell rang



Ill one year, eating curry on the floor (our furniture hadn't been delivered yet)



Sitting on the kitchen floor with my dog, crying, after a row with my now ex



Finding my boyfriend

passed out on a

roundabout at 12.04!

Crashing my car and being dropped at the pub in a recovery truck

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VERSACE

BOSS



BOSS MAVIE

POUR FEMME

FROM THE EDITOR

Not so long ago, my husband and I were out walking one evening when we stumbled upon a young woman – no older than 25 or 26. She was pushing a young baby in a buggy with one hand, and in the other, she gripped the leads of two barking dogs. I think the buggy must have tipped over with the force of one the animals – all I can remember is that we stopped to help her and somehow we started talking. She explained that her baby was just nine months old, that

she had a couple of young, recently abandoned ponies at home and that she had rehomed the larger, more boisterous of the two dogs from a rescue shelter. She had also just lost her husband.

"He's not trainable," she said, looking at the dog. "People have been telling me to give up on him for months, but I'm not going to. You can't just give up on things, can you?"

It was autumn and the light was beginning to fade. She smiled, then explained she had to get back to feed the ponies before sunset. She vanished just as quickly as she had appeared. My

husband and I fell silent, both of us stunned by this brave young woman whose attitude to life hadn't been dimmed by the darkness around her.

She is just one of millions of courageous and brilliant women who walk among us every day; people whose actions and attitudes inspire us all. This month, we celebrate 17 of these incredible women – some names you'll know, and some you won't – at our Ultimate Women Awards in association with Baileys. Their stories (which you'll find from p77), show that achieving anything is possible – as long as you never give up.



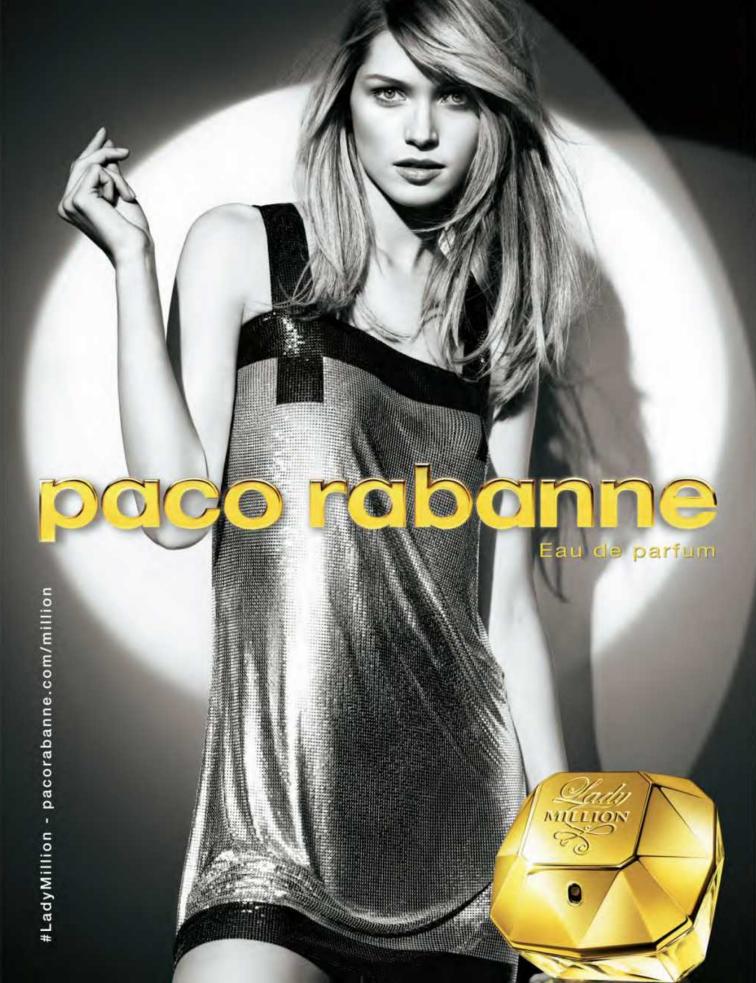








* Follow me on Twitter @Farrah_Storr and Instagram @farrahstorr



HOT AND HAPPENING, IT'S

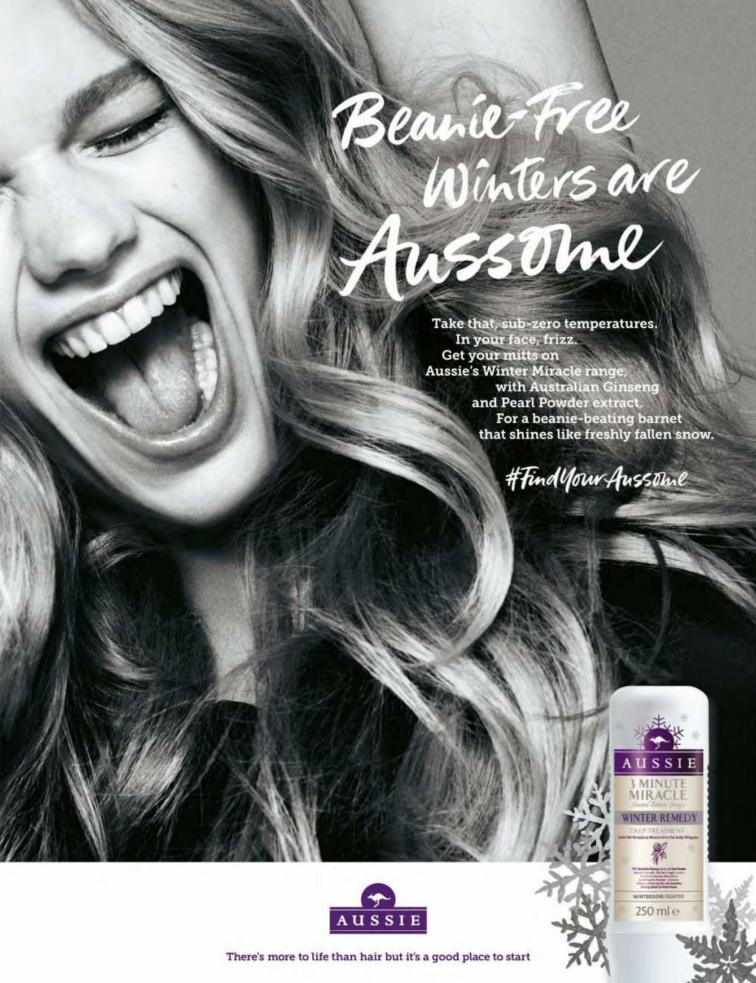
THE RISE OF THE POD SQUAD

Have you noticed something strange about your fellow commuters recently?

Have they traded their Kindles for big, cushiony headphones? Do they look like they're deep in concentration, and groan as their journey comes to an end? Chances are they're hooked on podcasts. After last year's sleeper hit Serial (what do you mean you've not downloaded it yet?) – the 12-part series about a young man incarcerated for his ex girlfriend's murder and the first podcast to reach 5 million downloads in iTunes history – people are switching on to the simple pleasures of aural story telling. The second series of Serial, about US soldier Bowe Bergdahl who was taken prisoner by the Taliban, is set to drop into iTunes any day, and there are said to be plans for a third. If that doesn't appeal to you try out the hilarious My Dad Wrote A Porno, as well as Invisibilia and IRL UK.







TRY THE

TREND

Zig-zag Swag

Hey, is it 1987 all over again? Hell, no – it's just that smart girls understand the hair-volumising merits of getting up close and personal with a crimper

FINE HAIR

* If backcombing bores you to tears, use a mini crimper for a root boost.

Part and section off the hair on your crown so that it spans two inches either side of your parting. Got that?

2 Now crimp the roots of the hair underneath this section in two-inch-wide strands at a time, crimping once at the base of the roots and again right next to it.

Tease some extra oomph into your roots with your fingertips, then conceal by releasing the top layers and styling as usual.

SHORT HAIR

* Soft, baby kinks are what you're after – as opposed to deep, McCoy's-style crinkle-cut crimps.

Unite art director Daniel Jordan advises investing in

■ Jordan advises investing in a crimper with temperature control and selecting a cooler setting for barely there kinks.

2 He also suggests applying a mattifying product for a more lived-in look, or running a bristle brush through to add some dishevelled softness.



THICK HAIR

* A ponytail is the thickhaired girl's go-to style, and Wella Professionals creative director Eugene Souleiman killed the the crimp's '80s connotations with an elegant floating pony at the Issey Miyake A/W15 show.

Part the hair on your crown into a V shape, starting in a point at your forehead and widening out down the back of your neck. Use the pointy end of a tail comb to get a sharp part.

2 Smooth the side sections over your ears and into a ponytail at the nape using a brush sprayed with hairspray. Crimp the tail in fine layers.

Release the top section of your hair and crimp it in layers from the same starting point as the ponytail below. Set the look with more hairspray.





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#AGELESS







Let's stop encouraging misogyny

I'm not into slut-shaming, but why do we let men think objectifying us is OK? We need more self-respect, says JAMEELA JAMIL his column might not sit well with all of you, but it's something I've been musing over, and I want to start the conversation.

It all started when I went to my first proper LA hip-hop club recently for a rap-album launch party. I had interviewed one of the artists in the past, so I was invited into the VIP section – a corner of the club that contained a few famous rappers. The VIP area, cordoned off with red ropes and stocked with champagne, was bursting with female models in their early twenties predominantly dressed in lingerie. These women had been specifically chosen by men whose job it was to find eye candy for the rappers.

It gets worse. Any girl who had managed to sneak into the VIP section and was anything less than Victoria's Secret-worthy was ejected. I heard a security guard tell one girl, "You know you're not hot enough to be in here."

Did this shunned woman question his right to speak to her in this way? No. She just looked apologetic for not meeting the model standards required to stand near a famous man – god forbid they be exposed to something as traumatic as cellulite.

During the night, the rappers would point at girls they liked from the VIP area, in much the same way you would choose what you wanted with your 2AM kebab. These women would then be ushered over and expected to throw themselves at said guy, which they did, without prompting.

At one point, a man had a girl on her knees simulating a blow-job to the rhythm of the music playing, while he laughed with his friends.

Meanwhile, other girls who hadn't been selected for the VIP section >



surrounded the area, determined to get in. They gave the rappers the most intense come-to-bed eyes I've ever seen, while practically riding that red rope like Seabiscuit. They would then scream with delight when they were rewarded with entry into this increasingly cramped, sweaty cesspit.

At the end of the night, my friend and I walked past four massive SUVs taking the rappers home, which were surrounded by girls begging to be taken in by these men. "Please let me in the car, I'll suck your dick," one shouted out, unapologetically. The rapper's bodyguard then responded, "Nah, bitch, you ugly," before slamming the car door in her face. And here's the worst bit: according to my local friends, the night I witnessed was typical of the rap club scene.

I'm not trying to slut-shame here. Women can wear what they want and sleep with whomever they want, for whatever reason they want. But this, to me, felt off. I'd estimate that there were more than 1,000 women in that

club not looking like they were enjoying themselves.

were enjoying themselves They were like herded cattle; just surface-layer commodities. Pieces of ass, and nothing more. But *why* were they so desperate to be in that VIP ring and go home with these men who displayed no respect for them? Men who were actively laughing at them,

and discarding anyone who didn't physically meet their standards?

Am I being a prude? Or is it healthy to scream to a rapper you've never met, in front of a crowd of people, that you'll give him a blow job?

I get that there's a fascination with celebrity and money, and that some women – such as Amber Rose, Blac

RAP RESPUN

What would happen if rappers became feminists?



Chyna and Kim Kardashian – have had lucrative careers and immense fame by dating famous musicians. I get that this lifestyle might be appealing to some women. But we must recognise that

this behaviour is not just enabling misogyny, but also encouraging it.

What message does it send? Does it tell men that what they have reduced members of our sex to is immoral and hugely unfavourable? Or do the practically naked girls queuing up to perform soft porn in public send out the message that not only is it OK to objectify women, but

it's actually what we want?

'Is it healthy

to scream.

in a crowd,

that you'll

give a rapper

a blow job?"

And by the way, please don't try to equate this to the argument about 'asking for it' when it comes to rape. My stance on that is very clear: the victim is ALWAYS blameless. This is an entirely separate issue.

We have the power to stop this exploitation at any time. We have our

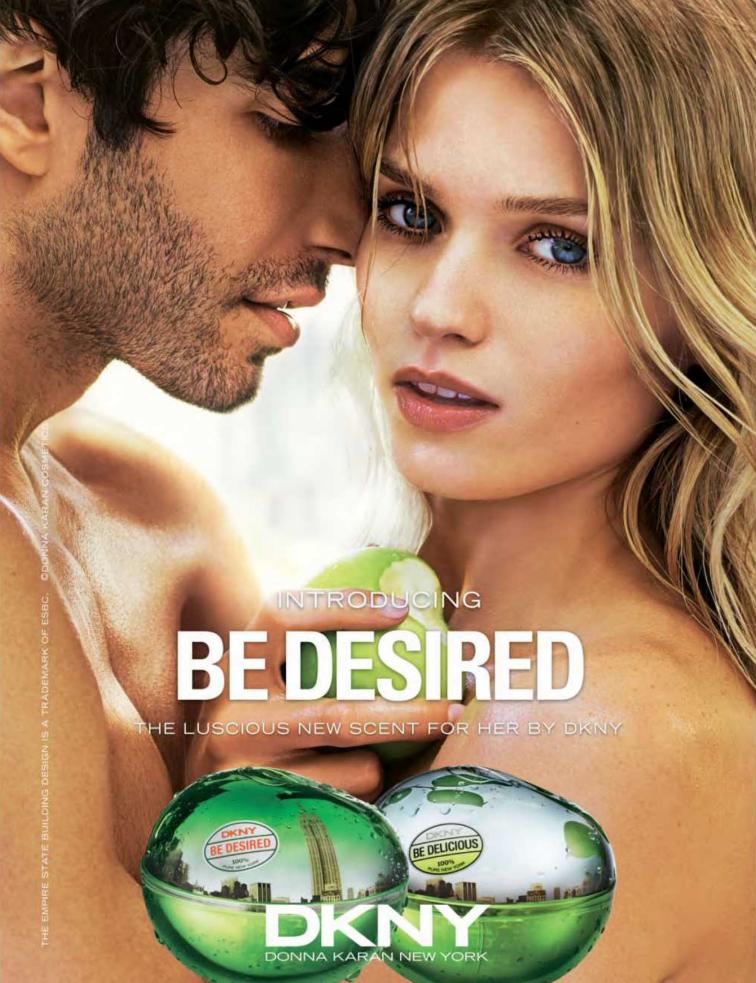
freedom and sexual liberty. Men in our society do not own it. Actress Emily Ratajkowski, who now complains about her *Blurred Lines* fame, didn't *bave* to appear almost naked in that music video and, equally, the girls in the club I visited weren't held at gunpoint to stay in that VIP area and be treated like disposable sex toys.

Instead, an empty VIP area would have sent a very clear message to the embarrassed, lonely musicians sitting on their tod, that maybe what they were doing wasn't desirable, and perhaps they should rethink their strategy. If no one had turned up to Pharrell and Robin Thicke's casting for Blurred Lines because no woman thought it acceptable to run around almost naked in front of a room of fully dressed men, then they might have tried another angle for the video.

We're not victims anymore, and thinking that we are isn't going to change anything. We are smart, talented and sexy on our own terms. If we send the message together that this behaviour will not be tolerated. and we forgo the fear that we won't be accepted by men, eventually we will have to be heard. They need us. We are half the human race, and we have all the goodies they want. If they think they can't have said goodies without treating us with respect and valuing us as rounded individuals, they might actually grow up and open their eyes. But we will never achieve this without taking a stand. No amount of slut-shaming rallies in our underwear will be as effective as a complete boycott of misogyny.

Sex is a wonderful part of being a woman, and it should always be celebrated. But it's also just *one* of the many dimensions that we have to offer. It's now up to us to take back what's rightfully ours.

We deserve it. Let's do it together. •



Big love

"The last person I said, 'I love you' to was my son Henry. Nothing competes with the birth of my sons [Henry and James]. I'll remember the feeling forever."

Smelling good

"The best-smelling actress I've ever met was my friend Elizabeth Taylor. I still have a bottle of the fragrance she wore - it takes me back to moments we shared."

The Irish actor is a man of his word. but he has a knack for not being very good at things...

HIS VITALS

Dublin

Big break He received critical acclaim in Tigerland (2000), about

a Vietnam War-era training camp.

Crazy fact #1 Colin auditioned for boyband Boyzone. Sadly, his rendition of Careless Whisper didn't impress.

Crazy fact #2 In Sydney, Colin was once arrested for attempted murder

- but it was a case of mistaken identity.

Age 39

Birthplace

High maintenance? "If I'm not working, I let my hair grow out.

Grooming for me is brushing my teeth! But I like Dolce & Gabbana Intenso. It's one of the first scents I've worn in years."

On fame

"The strength of a man's word is really what his success - as a human being - should be measured by."

Bad boy

"My least favourite thing about myself is my impatience. I'm [also] good at not being good at things."

* Colin Farrell is the face of Intenso by Dolce & Gabbana. Read more from Colin at Cosmopolitan.co.uk/hello colin.

The Pointing you in the right cultural direction this month.



IDRIS FEVER

The new series of Luther starring Idris Elba starts this month, meaning further opportunity to inspect whether those penis rumours are true or not.

MOURNING YOGA

Downward dogging in cemeteries? Actually a thing in the US, where yogis believe the proximity to graves 'enhances their connection to nature' Right.

TEA HOUSES

Forget coffee shops and juice bars, a cup of oolong in deeply cool environs is the new hot hangout. Amanzi Tea in London is our favourite.



CAKEAGE FEES

Some restaurants now charge up to £9 per head when customers bring their own birthday cake. Corkage is one thing, but cakeage? Shove it.



SOAP COUTURE

Pat Butcher and Deirdre Barlow appear to have inspired the more-is-morestyle accessories on the S/S16 catwalks. And we're cool with that...

THE CHAMBONG

This champagne flute/ glass bong hybrid allows you to down your fizz in under three minutes. Seriously? The last thing we need right now.



COMMUTING FAILS It is *not* OK to trim your

nails, watch Dr Who (with

cereal using a toothbrush

no headphones), or eat

as cutlery on the train.

All recently witnessed.

CAT POP

Lil BUB, one of the most famous cats on Instagram, is releasing her first album, Science & Magic. Electro music is, apparently, her true passion.



STRANGER SHAMING

Ever wanted to star-rate a person like you do a restaurant? No, us neither. Yet new app Peeple appears to think you do. Not cool.



SMELLING LIKE US

What would your favourite magazine smell like if it was a perfume? Here at last is the answer to one of life's deepest questions. Cosmopolitan The Fragrance, £38, Boots.



inking our sh

Framboise Noire

= HEART OF DARKNESS =



SHAY & BLUE



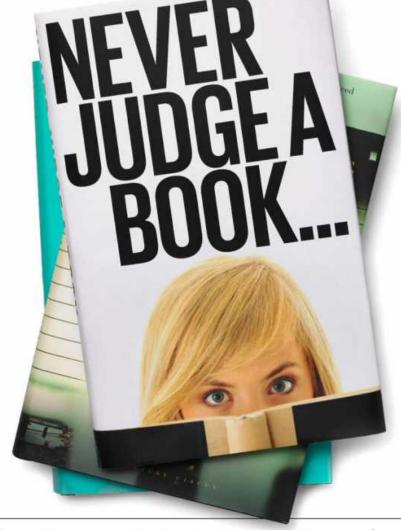


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BOOKS



Crap, ill-conceived book jackets can get in the way of a seriously good read – as these main offenders prove...



When James Franco posted a selfie captioned, 'This book is amazing' next to the sort of schmaltzy scene you'd expect to see in the Hallmark bargain bin, we all wondered if he was having us on. But Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan series of novels, chronicling the friendship of two girls from a poor

town in Italy, has become a cult sensation that's also won Gwyneth Paltrow and Reese Witherspoon as fans. Ferrante writes under a pen name – yet, despite the fact that her works have been hailed as modern masterpieces, she has never revealed her true identity. The fourth and final book, The Story Of The Lost Child, was recently released, but any recommendation should come with a warning: ignore the cover. One look at the seriously naff artwork, and her decision to stay anonymous makes a whole lot more sense. Here are four more we think got a

rough deal on the

cover-art front...

COVER UP

Too embarrassed to get your book out in public? Cover it up with a gorgeous V&A Book Jacket (£9.99, Waterstones) in printed cotton. Handy if you're the person reading Gone Girl three years after everyone else.



THE LAST KISS **GOODBYE**

by Tasmina Perry (£16.99, Headline Review) The cover is corny, yes, but

this is no ordinary love story. It cleverly weaves

together two stories - one set in 1961 and the other present-day - which are connected by one mysterious photograph.



HAUSFRAU

by Jill Alexander Essbaum (£7.99, Picador)

This haunting tale of a woman who feels detached from her husband and embarks on a series of

affairs is one of the best debuts of 2015 - but the crumpled bedsheets and title make make this look like Germany's answer to Fifty Shades.



THE LOST ART OF **KEEPING SECRETS**

by Eva Rice (£8.99. Headline Review)

This modern classic was reissued this year (with a bonus brand-new short

story) for its 10th anniversary. Set in the post-World War II years, the charming coming-of-age tale about an 18-year-old and her eccentric family has won an army of fans despite its rubbish cover art.



IN PLAIN SIGHT: THE LIVES AND LIES OF JIMMY SAVILE

by Dan Davies (£9.85, Quercus)

A book with Jimmy

Savile's face on it is the last thing anyone wants to be seen holding. But Dan Davies' account of the TV presenter's monstrous life - and how he got away with it all - is gripping.

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Light side or dark side? Find your look at www.maxfactor.com

FILM FOCUS

Who's that girl?

Get ready to see a lot of this pretty mug – she's the star of STAR WARS: EPISODE VII - THE FORCE and she's pretty damn amazing

Last year, British actress
Daisy Ridley became an
internet sensation overnight
when the cast of the new *Star Wars* film was released. But as
bemused fans frantically googled
her name, searches threw up little
on the then-unknown 23-year-old
actress who plays the film's
female lead, Rey. Here,
she tells us what
you *won't* find
out online...

MOST EMBARRASSING ITUNES DOWNLOAD

"I have two: *The Lion King* and *Wicked* soundtracks – and I'm not ashamed of either."

BIGGEST MISCONCEPTION

"That I'm the daughter of [British activist] Yvonne Ridley, who was captured by the Taliban. I'm not."

RANDOM FACT

"I react really badly to anaesthetic – it makes me weep every time."

SECRET VICE

"I don't drink much and I'm not into drugs, but I so love a great shish kebab."

SPECIAL SKILL

"I pull a great p nt.
I was working in a pub
when I landed the *Star Wars* role, and men
would assume I knew
nothing, but I *know* my
beer and ale."

* Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens is released by Disney on 18 December

SCHOOL NICKNAME

"Encylodais', because I knew a lot of really obscure facts people didn't care about."

BAD HABIT

"I used to be a lot more hot-headed, but I hate that feeling when you say things that are really mean and you don't know where they came from. I decided I didn't want to be this angry person anymore."



By The Sea

(out 11 Dec) Brad and Ange (who also directs this) reunite on screen for this sepia-tinged '70s drama about a couple forced to confront their marital issues while on holiday by the French seaside.

Big smiles for the

camera, guys...





2 Grandma (out 11 Dec) Indie

comedy following the adventures of Sage (Julia Garner) and her brilliantly acerbic grandmother Elle (Lily Tomlin), whose help she seeks in paying for an abortion when she falls pregnant by her 'kind-of boyfriend'.



3 The Night Before

(out 4 Dec) Like The Hangover - only with better jumpers. Best friends Ethan (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), Isaac (Seth Rogen) and Chris (Anthony Mackie) meet up for their annual Christmas Eve lads' night out - with disastrous consequences, naturally.







MAX FACTOR X



THE MAKE-UP OF MAKE-UP ARTISTS

"when looking to nail best dressed...
fringe

I always consider the

factor.

Essie

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fashion flares

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fringe factor

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SOMETIMES IT'S WHAT'S ON THE OUTSIDE THAT COUNTS



ICF

Key item: embellished slouch jeans.
Pale-blue denim screams out for decoration. These jeans are given street cred with pearl beading and, teamed with a statement shoe, they're ready for the dance floor. Go the whole retro hog with a jacket slung over your shoulders. The '80s would be proud.

Jacket, £115, Guess.
Shirt, £60, Levi's. Jeans,
£395, Paige. Sandals, £495,
Sophia Webster. Crystal
necklace, £78, Butler &
Wilson. Pearl necklace, £725,
Thomas Sabo. Bangles,
£139 each, Rebecca



We celebrate the spectrum of denim, from washed-out pale through to the deepest indigo, and show you exactly how it's worn this winter









COBALT

Key item:

tailored culottes.
Crisp and chic, the
culotte is the shape to
master this season.
Choose a pair in heavy
cotton drill or thickly
woven denim, which
hang better on the body
and best accentuate the
flare. Heels are key –
they give the necessary
height to pull off this
look with elegance.

Shirt, £199, Citizens of Humanity. Culottes, £110, Whistles. Shoes, £550, Alexander White. Beret, £33.57, Kangol. Bag, £735, Stella McCartney at Monnier Frères. Ring, £160, Maria Francesca Pepe



INK

Key item: dungarees.

Dungarees are no longer
the preserve of the
painter/decorator. You
too can carry off overalls
– just make sure the
hemline hits your ankle
bone to stop you looking
'swamped'. Layer over
a navy Breton top,
chuck on a long-line
denim jacket and you're
ready for action.

Jacket, £371; dungarees, £306, both Claudie Pierlot. Trainers, £125, Michael Michael Kors









Want to know how industry insiders style it out once they've left the office? Here's a clue: denim plays a big part

OFFDUTY





Philippa Bloom

Fashion editor of *You Magazine* and co-founder of fashion blog We Are Twinset

It's the weekend, you're wearing jeans – what's your style?

Grey skinnies from Zara. I used to think you had to spend a lot of money on denim, so I'd buy from brands such as Paige, Hudson and J Brand, but I found that they lost their shape too quickly. I'm all about super-skinny, stretchy jeans, and Zara does them brilliantly – at really affordable prices.

What's the key to wearing them?

Cut off the hem to make them look edgier; I hate that neat-hemline look. Also, don't wash them too often, it can ruin the fit. I wear these at least 10 times without washing them. The colour's perfect too – that sort of in-between grey looks so good with a white shirt.

What's your secret for styling a pair of skinny jeans?

With a shirt or an oversized tee, and a cocoon coat. You can wear skinny jeans however you want as long as you feel comfortable. Proportions are important, so I wouldn't necessarily wear a tight top with skinny jeans.

Tell us an 'insider' denim secret?

You don't have to spend more than £200 to get a good pair. Higher-waisted jeans that are really streamlined and fitted always look expensive.

How many pairs of jeans do you own? Somewhere between 30 and 40.

Any styling tips for your body shape?

If your best feature is your legs (as mine are), wear skinnies. It's important to accentuate what you like most about yourself and to know what works best for your shape. You'd never catch me in flares. That whole '70s vibe is huge right now, but it's just not my style.

DAVIC BECKHA DAVI^r BECKH BEYOND THE NEW FRAGRANCE IT ALL STARTS WITH A DREAM

Emily Johnston

Founder of fashion blog Fashion Foie Gras

It's the weekend, you're wearing jeans – what's your style?

I'm 6ft 2ins, so for me, it's all about trying to find styles that are long enough. I'm wearing American Eagle jeans, which work for tall girls. I also love Asos and Gap. I'm partial to a flare – the more extreme the better.

What's the key to wearing them?

There isn't one exact way – you can dress them up or down (I've even worn them on the red carpet). Plus, interestingly, with denim the more you wash it the better (and softer) it gets. I'm also a big fan of double denim. Be careful with proportions, so always wear a great pair of flares with a skinny top. And if you are going to wear flares, go big! The most flattering way to wear them is with a pair of killer heels. My motto is, 'Buy them long, wear them tall!'

Tell us an 'insider' denim secret?

Ignore the numbers on the label and pay most attention to the length and waistband, and whether they're right for your shape. Fit is everything.

How many pairs of jeans do you own? More than 65.

Any styling tips for your body shape?

I'm curvy and a size 14-16, so fit is very important to me. It's about knowing your own body. The bum of your jeans is the most important factor when choosing a pair – especially if you're curvy – yet I see so many women ignore their bum in the mirror when they're trying on denim. More often than not, ill-fitting-jean dilemmas stem from 'saggy bum bunch' (my oh-so-technical term), so try on as many pairs as you can to find the perfect fit for your rear. Remember, if your bum is curvy, avoid embellished pockets – simple, mid-sized ones will flatter.

'Curvy? The rear of your jeans is the most important factor'







DREAM

Sairey wears

Top, Warehouse. Jeans, £55, Oasis. Boots, Rupert Sanderson. Watch, Guess Watches. Bracelet, Thomas Sabo. Rings, Pandora

Photographs

Jenni Hare. Hair Heath Massi at Frank Agency, using Hair Rehab London. Makeup Megumi Matsuno at Carol Hayes Management, using Nars. **Nails Michelle** Humphrey at LMC Worldwide, using Maybelline. **Fashion assistant** Natasha Miles



Senior Fashion Editor at Cosmopolitan

It's the weekend, you're wearing jeans what's your style?

I go through phases, but right now I'm loving Oasis' new Cherry Slim Fit jeans in deep indigo - one of the few shades you can carry off in the office. They're got a really comfortable high waistband - a huge plus if you're conscious of your stomach.

What's the key to wearing them?

I wear mine as a smart trouser, hence my love of inky blacks. And the darker the shade, the more flattering they are. I style them with a chic blazer or a fitted rollneck to keep my look sleek and pulled-together.

Tell us an 'insider' denim secret?

Always try jeans a size down - they'll give as you wear them. And really try on your jeans and take the time to see and feel how they fit. Look at where the waitstband sits - a true high-waisted skinny should ideally hit the tummy button or be just above it. In the changing room, make sure you can do up the top button snugly; they should feel tight when you first try them, but not uncomfortable. Now sit on the floor crossed-legged to make sure they don't cut in or pinch. Yes, you'll feel weird... and yes, it will be worth it.

How many pairs of jeans do you own? At the moment, 33.

Any styling tips for your body shape?

My body shape is slim and quite boyish, so I avoid that 'carrot-style' leg - you know, those jeans that are cut to be slightly curved around the thigh. I tell my size by looking at the jeans themselves rather than by what's on the label. It's a better rule of thumb. Hold them up in front of you, then hold the waistband to your hips so you can judge the width. Then look at the length what's the point in buying jeans that are too long in the leg? •

the art OF COLOUR



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HEY, SPECIAL HOW DO IWEAR...

girlfriend jeans?

You've done skinnies, you've tried boyfriends... now it's time to meet your new girlfriend...

1 THE SKINNY

These are an upgrade on the boyfriend jean experience: higher-waisted, slimmer of leg and made from a more 'rigid' denim to maintain shape. And did we mention they're *very* kind to wider thighs?

2 HIGH OR LOW MAINTENANCE?

Girlfriends can be worn in two ways: clean and pulled together or ripped and slouchy like Gigi Hadid, here. If your vibe is more pulled apart, make sure any rips hit either your knees, the middle of your thighs (no higher) or mid-calf to ensure the most flattering finish.

3 IT JUST WON'T WASH

True jean obsessives know the golden rules – never wash them. Raw denim is best left unclean for six months to let the colour fully absorb. If you *must* freshen them up, wash them on a delicate cycle.

4 NO SHAPE SHIFTING

Remember: jeans made from stiff, good-quality denim will keep their shape as you wear them – just avoid putting your phone in your pocket – unless you're going for the saggy bottomed look.

5 LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Girlfriend jeans are cropped, cuffed or turned up to give a sexy flash of ankle. But don't panic – a higher-rise waist will elongate your legs and flatter your bottom. Avoid the 'soccer-mom' silhouette by always teaming with a heel.

Turn the page for more denim styling tips

Wear





* BOYISH

If you love the cool, low-fi look a boyfriend jean gives you, try a pair of girlfriends with a breezy frayed hem (you can do this yourself). Then chuck on an ironic slogan sweatshirt.

Jumper, £89, Wildfox. Jeans, £38, River Island. Shoes, £75, Dune



* SEXY

Got a waist? Great! Girlfriends will show if off – especially with a statement belt to draw attention right there. A snug jumper and loafers complete the Kendall Jenner effect.

Jumper, £59, Somerset by Alice Temperley. Jeans, £25, Boohoo. Shoes, £69, Dune.

Belt, £29.95, Massimo Dutti





***SMART**

Jeans can be smart. If you're petite, go for a style that allows you to adjust the length – a mullet hem gives the impression of a longer body. Team your jeans with a white crop top to show off your petite frame and take you from day to night, and elongate your legs with barely-there strappy heels. Masterclass over, now go forth and conquer...

Top, £8, Missguided. Jeans, £40, Topshop. Shoes, £50, Schuh ◆













THE FRAGRANCES FOR WOMEN

MARCJACOBSFRAGRANCES.COM





£160, Diesel

£34.99, Lindex

Wear

MAIN IMAGE: Sweatshirt, £55, Adidas Originals at Net-A-Porter. Jeans, £255, Stella McCartney. Shoes, £185, Russell & Bromley. Ring, £160, Maria Francesca Pepe >

£227, Paige Denim



£135, Armani Exchange



£49.95, Gap



£255, AG Jeans



Love the distressed look? Paint a little clear nail varnish around rips to

stop them getting bigger.



£49.99, Superdry







£42, Topshop





£265, Current Elliott



£85, Levi's



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Indulge in this fortifying formula with keratin proteins and argan oil. It helps to resist breakage caused by brushing and styling, while enhancing a luminescent shine. Discover spinds that are strengthened from within and nourished throughout, helping to me atain longer, stronger hair.



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BEAUTYOIL

There's an oil for everything these days – so, whatever your need or





S, REFINED



OIL FAQ

We asked three experts to tell us everything they know about beauty oils. Read their hows, whens and whys of application and you'll never be confused again

FACE



ABIGAIL JAMES LIZ EARLE TREATMENT AMBASSADOR

Q OK, then, how often should face oil be applied?

Twice a day. But if you only do it once, evening is best.

What are the benefits of using oil at the end of the day?

A Skin does most of its regeneration at night. Applying oils before bed aids this repair work and helps to balance your natural oil production.

Q Can facial oils be layered with other products?

Yes, but apply any water-based product (such as a serum) first so it can be fully absorbed, otherwise the oil will create a barrier and the serum won't sink into your skin.

Do facial oils have to be so bloody expensive?

A Vast quantities of the plant or seed are needed to produce an oil, and the extraction process takes time too.

Any ingredients we should steer clear of?

Avoid all mineral oils, often labelled 'paraffinum liquidum'. They coat the skin like cling film and block pores. Over time, skin will look dull because it can't breathe properly.

Should anyone not use oil?

Only people who suffer from rosacea. Blemish-prone skin benefits most from oils rich in oleic acid (think moringa, apricot kernel and rosehip) because they are most like our natural sebum.



HAIR



JOSH WOOD FOUNDER OF JOSH WOOD ATELIER

What ingredients should we watch out for in hair oil?

A There isn't really anything specific you should avoid. A lot of people think silicones are bad, but in hair oil they work as smoothing agents. I would always look for a natural active (my Radiant Shine Hair Treatment Oil contains kukui nut oil, among others), which actually treats the hair rather than just making it look glossy.

What's the most effective way to apply hair oil?

A I like to do a treatment once a week, especially on coloured hair. To get the best results, apply oil to wet hair before you wash it, then cleanse and condition as normal. Once hair is dry, add a small amount to the ends to make them feel supple.

Any half-decent tips for applying hair oil?

A Don't be afraid of it! Oils are super-nutritious for hair, but you should always use them sparingly. A little goes a long way.

Should people with different hair types use different oils?

Alt isn't quite a case of one size fits all, but a light oil with key natural ingredients will deliver every time. People with oily scalps often have very dehydrated ends, so they should use oils wherever they need extra help super-charging moisture.

Can using too much oil make your hair greasy?

Alt depends how much you're using. If you're applying to dry hair, definitely don't oversaturate. It'll look like an oil slick.

RANY



COLLEEN HARTE FOUNDER OF LUCY ANNABELLA

When's the ideal time to use a body oil?

A It works best just after a bath or shower (and you can use it on wet or dry skin). That's when your pores are open and can more easily absorb the oil's vitamins.

Q Is it true that it works better when you apply it to wet skin?

A It is better, yes, but not totally essential. Wet skin allows the oil to penetrate more effectively. Paraben-free oils sink into the skin more readily too.

Q What are the advantages of using body oil over moisturiser?

A Water-based moisturisers are great for short-term hydration, but organic oils are packed with vitamins and fatty acids that repair and nourish on a deeper level.

What's the best way to apply oil to the body (apart from with the aid of Michael Fassbender's hands)?

A simple, circular motion is good. Sweeping movements over the ankles, knees and elbows encourage lymphatic drainage, which is great if you spend your days sitting at a desk.

Are there any ingredients in body oils that we should be wary of?

Perfume, lanolin, parabens, sodium lauryl (or laureth) sulphate and phthalates all have a negative effect on skin and health.



Bamford Botanic Body Oil, £35

Pai Rosehip BioRegenerate Oil, £22





BEAUTY LAB



Editor's pick

The quick-drying silicone is nonporous, so more hygienic than nylon bristles. It doesn't exfoliate like a brush, relying on sonic pulses to clear pores, so it's kind enough for daily use. Win!



Clarisonic Smart Profile, £199

The first facial brush to harness dirtdislodging sonic pulses now comes with a larger body attachment, with its own cleansing mode for the tougher skin on your limbs. Does this justify the hefty price tag? I suspect only loyal Clarisonic fans will think so.





Considering investing in a facial brush but not sure which ones are worth the spend? Acting Beauty Editor **CASSIE POWNEY** investigates



Braun Face, £69.99

Two of the three samples I got my hands on refused to start, so keep your receipt! I found the brush head a bit abrasive, so consider investing in the gentler attachment for £14.99. The epilator head included is handy for fine facial fuzz.





Crystal Clear Ionic Sonic Cleanse, £79.99

This silicone offering has a negative ion charge that attracts positively charged toxins. Translation: you get a thorough scrub. I'd ditch the accompanying cleanser, though - its key ingredient is the harsh detergent sodium laureth sulfate.



Magnitone London BareFaced! Vibra-Sonic Daily Cleansing Brush, £70

Boasts a second 'PulseLift' mode (as in, more dramatic bristle oscillations) that claims to amp up micro-circulation. I'd stick to the perfectly good (and less abrasive) first mode.







Blistex Relief Cream is a medicine for chapped lips. Always read the label.







volume





CREATE YOUR LOOK

- instead of just - finishing it



SHAPE TYLE CREATION HAIRSPRAYS

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INGE HAS ISSUES



Cosmopolitan's Beauty Director INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN gets a few things off her chest

Copper Copper

Despite not sounding like something you'd be very keen to find in your skincare, copper is suddenly everywhere. The reason? Formulators have only just found ways to keep this long-proven healer and collagen builder stable (and active) in topical products. You mix up NIOD Copper Amino Isolate Serum 1%, £60, with your own hands and keep it in the fridge to ensure it remains stable. A few daily drops on clean skin make me smell according to my husband - like an old metal workshop, but my skin was plumper and more even in days. Also great: iS Clinical Copper Firming Mist, £32, which soothes irritation and fights oiliness.

SHOULD YOU INVEST IN...

A LIP CREAM?



It seems that spending huge amounts of money on new 'perfecting' creams that utilise advanced

plumping and protecting agents for 'ageing' lips doesn't quite make me the mug I thought it did. Kim K's derm of choice, Dr Lancer, insists lip skin is so different from that on your face – it has no oil glands or melanin, for starters – that it requires specific anti-ageing peptides to regenerate. But if your budget won't stretch, at least get a decent balm such as

Lancer Volume Enhancing Lip Serum, £40 Nuxe Rêve de Miel Ultra Nourishing Lip Balm, £9.50. It contains

plant butters that nourish, as opposed to petroleum jelly, which only prevents water loss.



ERSONAL SHOPPER



OBSESSED

AMINO

AMINO

* Ruby Red Soothe + Gentle Body Cleanser, £32 A jumbo bottle of hydrating, plant-derived bubbles that smell of cardamom and jasmine – this makes me so happy.



IMPRESSED

* Sibberi Birch Water, from £2.49 Better than coconut water, this birch-tree sap

water, this birch-tree sap is packed to the gills with skin-clearing, antiinflammatory salicylic acid. Top me up.



NON-PLUSSED

*** SK-II Mid-Day Essence, £51** I adore that this brightening, quenching lotion now comes as a fine face mist. But seriously – £51 and non-refillable? *Sadface*



JK's no.1 Styling Brand¹



POST MODERN

On any given day, most people's inboxes contain an assortment of Groupon deals, random Facebook requests and at least one message that promises to make you a millionaire (if you'll just send over your address, bank-account details and a scan of your passport...). So put some joy back into the inboxes of friends and loved ones by creating a personal newsletter. The new way to network (hey, Lena Dunham's got one so it must be good), it allows you to shout about what you've achieved, been up to or simply found funny that week – plus it's also a great way to connect with potential contacts. Use the platform TinyLetter to create yours... just remember, keep it short, simple and, ideally, a selfie-free zone.

Network like a *boss*

Want to know how the big cheese in the corner office ended up earning four times what you do? Then read carefully...

1 Have a get-out plan

The best bosses are efficient. Trapped listening to conversations about spreadsheets? Try 'mis-mirroring'. "If you're stuck with someone, step back and cross your arms," says psychologist Alan Redman. "It sends clear signals you're not interested." Done? Now make sure you're not sat next to them at the office Xmas do.

2 Get physical-ish

No, this isn't an HR issue waiting to happen; we're talking handshakes, not frisking. "Stimulating the skin's pressure receptors lowers stress hormones," says Tiffany Field, director of the Touch Research Institute. "Plus, warm touch stimulates the 'cuddle hormone' oxytocin, which in turn enhances trust and attachment." A winning formula for making contacts.

3 The Rule of Three

When standing in a group, adopt an 'open-two' or 'open-three' stance. "From above, an open-two looks like a 'V' shape and an open-three a 'U," explains Dr Ivan Misner, founder of BNI, the world's largest business-networking organisation. "That way there's always an open spot for someone else to join the group." And the more people you speak to, the higher your chance of meeting the *right* person.







5 Grin and bear it

This is one you can (and probably should) practise in the mirror at home first: the 'slow-onset smile' - one that unfolds slowly across your face. It sounds a bit creepy, but it actually has a positive effect on the people you meet. "People with slow-onset smiles are seen as more attractive and trustworthy, and less dominant," says social psychologist Dr Eva Krumhuber. Think Rachel McAdams in The Notebook, not the Joker in Batman.

6 Get in gear

Joggers and Converse may be more forgiving than your tailored cigarette pants and heels, but research at Northwestern University suggests what you wear not only determines how you feel but also how you behave - it's called 'enclothed cognition'. So step away from the sportswear, luxe or otherwise; in work mode it's all about looking, feeling and getting the part. Comfort can wait.

7 Shiny, happy people

Show the person you're speaking to a good time. "Inspire them or make them laugh," suggests business psychologist Dr Rob Yeung. Failing that, get them a chocolate canapé – dark chocolate contains a compound that releases the same endorphins triggered by sex, and increases the feelings of attraction between people. And happy people means better connections. •































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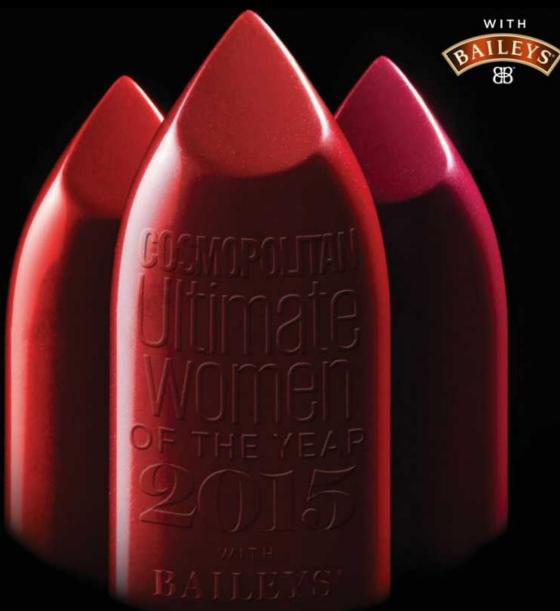
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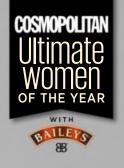


MSMM P

A DECADE OF CELEBRATING INCREDIBLE WOMEN



This year, in association with Baileys, we're celebrating our 10th annual *Cosmopolitan* Ultimate Women of the Year Awards. For the past decade, we've honoured a whole host of smart, brave and inspiring people – and now, over the next 17 pages, we're sharing this year's winners with you. You're about to meet the incredible women who are breaking boundaries, smashing glass ceilings and changing your world for the better. Join us in raising a glass to our winners...



RODO ON THE YEAR

She's the Australian maths 'dork' turned Hollywood actress, who has made her size a key asset in some of the funniest films of the decade. *Cosmopolitan*'s Ultimate Woman 2015 **REBEL WILSON** tells Lottie Lumsden about smashing stereotypes, hanging out with the A-list and how she *knows* she'll win an Oscar







is choking on a protein ball. "I've got a tiny chia seed from it stuck in my throat," she splutters. She waves her hands in front of her face and coughs dramatically. "Sorry, this always happens. These healthy balls! I should've just gone for the brownie."

This is very Rebel – smart, funny and acutely self-deprecating... even in the face of death (more of which later). She's a major actress now, of course, with the requisite Los Angeles home, Oscars after-party invites and an inability to leave the house without amassing a stream of fans in her wake. But there's very little that's typically Hollywood about this 35-year-old Australian's behaviour. (She drove herself to our cover shoot straight from the gym, arriving totally makeup-free wearing a towel turban and sunglasses.)

Law student, self-confessed maths geek, daughter of two dog handlers from suburban Sydney and a UK size 18-20, Rebel was never going to be the girl most likely to become a Hollywood star. And yet...

"Being unique and different was a really good thing," she explains in her soft Australian lilt. "When I walked into my agent's office for the first time [in 2009], they looked at me and said, 'Wow, we have nobody on our books like you.' And they signed me on my second day here.

"I wouldn't ever want to compete with what I call 'the glamours' – the really gorgeous people. I'm about the brain, the heart and what's on the inside. I feel really lucky to be the body type I am."

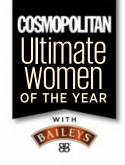
It's certainly worked in Rebel's favour. While studying law and arts at university in Australia, she found work on the side as a comic actress. (She regales me with a story of how an agent told her he couldn't see her

being on *Home And Away*. "Probably because I don't look that good in a bikini running down the beach," she deadpans.) Degree complete, she packed her bags and headed to Hollywood.

"When you first come here it's pretty rough," she laughs. "I stayed in

Venice Beach for a couple of weeks and I used to call [my apartment] the 'Venice drug den'. It was this tiny little room. An Australian actress I know had said, 'Oh, I have a place, you should rent it from me'. It was just one bed and a chair and there were all these people doing marijuana right outside. I felt very unsafe!"

But it wasn't long before Rebel landed her first film role. "I was really lucky, because it took Rob Pattinson 18 months to book [a film] and he'd been in the *Harry Potter* movie," she says, raising an eyebrow. "I was very determined, and three



months in – on my 30th audition – I got booked on *Bridesmaids*."

Funnily enough, she went for Melissa McCarthy's role as Megan Price in the Judd Apatow-produced hit comedy. She didn't get it, but she impressed director Paul Feig so much, he created a role for her as Matt Lucas and Kristen Wiig's inappropriate housemate.

"At the time I was a bit too young

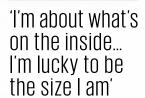
and she [Melissa] was best friends with [the directors and producers], so she got the role," Rebel recalls. "But I did so well with my improvising that they added me in."

Rebel was, by her own admission, "a bit dorky" at school. Not only did she compete in dog shows with her parents

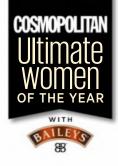
("I was a good little shower!"), she also took part in the Australian junior maths Olympiad in her teens, and actually dreamt of becoming an actuary. "Thank god I'm not doing that now," she laughs. "It would be too boring, and I'd have ended up going into stand-up comedy later in life if I hadn't listened to a hallucination I had."

I'd read about this before meeting Rebel – the hallucination, that is. When she was 18, she was chosen to be a Rotary International Youth Ambassador for Australia and lived in Zimbabwe for a year. There, Rebel contracted malaria, and while she was very ill, she had a fever-induced vision that told her she was going to become a hugely successful actress.

"In the hospital I had this hallucination that I won an Oscar," she explains. "I got up there and did >







a rap acceptance speech and the crowd loved it. It was so vivid. I'd watched *The Oprah Winfrey Show* the day before, and she used to say that if you get a whisper of an idea, listen to it. It was a message telling me to become an actress. Nobody would *ever* have thought it. Even my own family were like, 'Who would put *you* in the movies?'"

The not-so-elephant in the room is, of course, her body. Rebel is defiant about her size and her love of food. By her own admission, she is an emotional eater.

'I don't do drugs;

I don't really

drink... eating

is my one vice'

"I love me some ice cream or dessert, and it comes at times when I'm happy or sad," she says. "So when I have an incredibly successful day, I want to celebrate and reward myself with food. If I've had a sad or stressful day, food is also comfort. I bought this

hilarious slogan sweater the other day that says, 'Food is my only friend'. I thought it was really cute.

"You would probably describe it as emotional or stress-eating. I don't do drugs; I don't really drink... so eating is my one vice. I wouldn't ever want to totally give it up.

"I go to the gym five days a week with a personal trainer, and I do hiking and tennis on Saturdays," she adds. "You need to be fit to be able to bring it 16 hours a day on a film set. I wasn't brought up with the most nutritious diet, and I'm trying to learn [about healthy eating] because you never want to promote unhealthiness. You want to be healthy but it's important to be happy as well. Living in LA you learn a lot about

health. I now drink green juices and I'm trying to do gluten-free." Then she adds, chuckling, "But I don't do it 100% – I'm not a maniac!"

Rebel is currently working on the third instalment of the *Pitch Perfect* franchise, in which she plays Fat Amy, as well as nine other projects. They include a cameo in the *Absolutely Fabulous* film and a lead role in *How To Be Single* next year alongside Dakota Johnson, and she's also teamed up with Sacha Baron Cohen for *The Brothers Grimsby*. "At the moment the comedy stuff is all go, go, go," she says. "Although I am looking for a transitional role where I can show my dramatic acting."

So what was it like working with Sacha on his new film about football hooligans in England? "He's

one of the kings of British comedy," she says. "I went over to his house to celebrate Passover and Sacha said he'd been thinking about me for his film. His wife [Isla Fisher] is in it too, and she is honestly one of the funniest people.

"Coming from an underprivileged background myself, I can really relate to the working-class thing [in the film]. For research, I watched the TV show *Benefits Street*, went to some English pubs, did karaoke and even worked in a fish-and-chip shop."

And what of her sex scenes with Sacha? "My agent said I'm quite sexy in the film," she laughs. "And that's weird because I'm deliberately trying to be grotesque – but apparently it comes off as kind-of hot. I met Sacha

through Matt (Lucas) – they went to school together."

When Rebel talks about Matt, her face lights up. He's clearly a big influence in her life and they lived together for three years after playing roommates in *Bridesmaids*.

"Matt is the kindest, most generous person," she says. "He's like an older brother to me and he cracks me up. I've moved into my own place now and Matt came over to see it. His comment was that I needed some high-end dinner plates. He told me, 'You can't have these cheap plates,' so I went out and got a new set that were \$110 each!"

Rebel has also become friends with megastar actress-of-the-moment Jennifer Lawrence. "She is just the most naturally hilarious person," she says. "She's way funnier than me and a real story-teller. If she was in a comedy she'd smash it. We'll hang out or have a barbecue. That's the cool thing about living here – you get to meet so many people you respect and work with."

But Rebel insists there's no room for a serious relationship in her life right now. She reportedly split from her comedian boyfriend Mickey Gooch in September, but they're still close. "I'm very independent and have been single for most of my life," she says. "I see people who are very co-dependent and I think they're missing out on life. It's good because I do whatever the hell I want.

"My mum really sacrificed her life when she started having us kids, and so she always encouraged us to go out there and chase after our dreams and live our lives.

"I'm hoping the right guy will come along. But if it doesn't happen I'm alright. I'm a very independent lady and I've got my own stuff going on."

And with that, she's off.

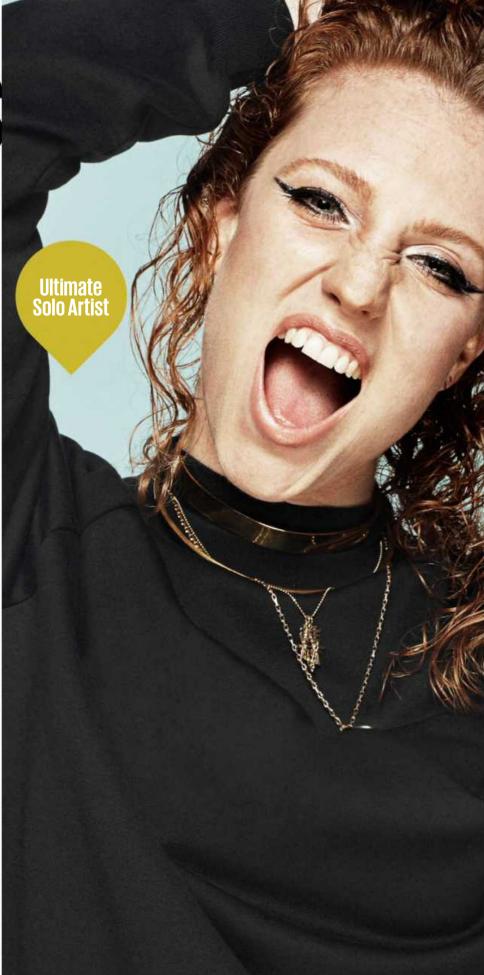


AND OUR WINNERS ARE...

Jess Glynne 🕨

Jess burst on to the scene in 2014 when she featured on Clean Bandit's Rather Be. Since then, as well as winning a Grammy for the track, she's had four more No.1 singles, and her debut album went straight to the top of the UK charts.

When I was little I was always being told to shut up. I'd sing Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey everywhere I went. I didn't realise it was a talent until later. Starting out, I was told to go away and write 100 songs. I was working at a music-management company but wanted to be an artist. One of the guys told me that was what I had to do. It took a couple of years - and here I am. Releasing my first album was the most amazing feeling. It was two and a half years in the making and for it to get to No.1 and stay in the top 10 for so long was incredible. I feel out of my depth all the time. Filming the video for *Take Me Home* was hard - it's such an emotional song and I was naked in it, because I wanted to embrace empowerment and vulnerability. At times like that I close my eyes and take a deep breath. Performing a sell-out gig at The Roundhouse in London was insane. Singing My Love was really special – it's about my parents who were there. My friends and family keep me sane. When I've got time off I like to see them, eat food, chill and be me. I've never come close to giving up in my career. It would take a lot for me to be like, 'Do one'.







Karren Brady 🔺

Known as the 'First Lady of Football', Baroness Brady became managing director of Birmingham City aged 23, and sold it for £82m 16 years later. Now 46, she's vice-chairman of West Ham, a peer in the House of Lords, adviser to Lord Alan Sugar on The Apprentice and the Government's small-business ambassador.

From a young age I wanted to make my own decisions. I was at boarding school where you're told what to eat, wear and do, so I wanted independence. My grandmother told me, "Never look down on people unless you're helping them up." I live by that; it's why I champion women in business. Early on, I learnt not to take things personally. I had to develop a thick skin because when you're a woman, everyone has something to say about you. People's attitudes changed the day I floated Birmingham City on the stock market. At 27, I was the youngest managing director of a PLC in the UK. Going into the House of Lords for the first time was daunting. You hope in some way you can make a change. It's an incredible honour. I don't find the truth painful. I much prefer it. You can cut out a lot of wasted time and I'd rather people were frank and open.
My kids keep me sane. They remind me it's OK to laugh at myself. They're the reason I want to be a good role model. I want to inspire. Don't look back on your career and say, 'I wish I had...' It's always

better to challenge yourself and fail than not try in the first place.









Casey Stoney

Arsenal Ladies footballer Casey MBE, 33, is a former England captain who helped the team to third place in the 2015 World Cup. In 2012, she led the Team GB squad for the London Olympics.

Every hair on my body stood on end when I walked Team GB out at the Olympics. I'd dreamt about it since I was a little girl and I felt 10ft tall. I wish I'd been told how hard it is to get to the top. It's worth it but, starting out, I didn't understand the sacrifices I'd have to make - missing family weddings and christenings, and being away from my babies. I was told I'd never make a career out of football. Growing up, it was considered a man's sport. Now I'm a professional, I still come up against men thinking I don't have a clue. For many years, I didn't have any perspective. It was all football, football, football. Now my partner Megan keeps me sane, and when I go home, I shut the door on work. I didn't have any confidence in my abilities until 2007. After the World Cup I won International Player of the Year and realised I was good enough. I almost quit football six years ago; it seemed financially unstable. My family persuaded me not to give up. If they hadn't, I wouldn't have captained my country or gone to the Olympics. When I got my MBE, all I could think about was getting the curtsy right. There was so much to remember. The Queen asked me when I was planning to retire. I thought, 'God, do I look that old already?'



Abi Morgan 🔺

BAFTA and Emmy award-winning writer and producer Abi, 47, is best known for her work on Shame and The Iron Lady. Her latest film Suffragette, starring Carey Mulligan and Meryl Streep, is being tipped for the Oscars.

I almost gave up when I was 29. I felt like the oldest waitress in town. I'd had another script turned down and thought everything I wrote was rubbish. Being around loved ones kept me going. That, and lots of dark chocolate. At some point we all have 'imposter syndrome'. If I feel out of my depth, I remind myself everyone feels like that. You have to hold your nerve and say, 'I'm interested in everyone else here – I hope they'll be interested in me'. Comedy is the greatest gift and the hardest thing to write. There's a myth that writing drama is more difficult, but executing a funny line and making it mean something is the hardest thing in the world. I'm in awe of people like Tina Fey and Amy Schumer. It's not always easy to make the world seem funny. I don't know if it saves lives but there have been times when a Billy Wilder comedy or Nora Ephron romcom has saved my life, I think.

You have to keep marching forwards. The best advice I've ever been given was, 'Take that chip off your shoulder.'

I hate the phrase 'having it all'. It makes everyone feel miserable because *no one* has it all. If someone smugly says they do, it's rubbish. There's always something spilling out – work, family or friends.

I've benefited so much from others reaching down and pulling me up. As you travel upwards in your career, pull someone else up the ladder too.





American Carrie shot to fame in 1977 when she played Princess Leia in the first Star Wars film, aged just 21. Universally renowned, this month the acclaimed actress and writer reprises the role in Episode VII: The Force Awakens.

What springs to mind when someone mentions Princess Leia? For most people, it's the image of Carrie Fisher wearing that unforgettable metal bikini in Return Of The Jedi and her 'cinnamon buns' hairstyle. Since being cast by George Lucas in Star Wars - only her second movie - Carrie, now 59, has gone on to become a cultural icon. Born to Hollywood royalty actress Debbie Reynolds and singer Eddie Fisher - she's also known as the voice of Peter Griffin's boss Angela on Family Guy, and has had Meryl Streep portray a character based on her in *Postcards From The Edge* (1990), adapted from her semi-autobiographical novel. HBO documentary Wishful Drinking, based on Carrie's hugely successful one-woman stage production and memoir, was nominated for an Emmy in 2010. It focused on her life story, including her struggles with mental-health issues and substance addiction. Now she's back in The Force Awakens. Of the seemingly unstoppable franchise, she once commented, "People are still asking me if I knew Star Wars was going to be that big a hit. Yes, of course I knew. We all knew. The only one who didn't was George Lucas."

Carrie as Princess Leia in 1977's Star Wars



COSMOPOLITAN
Ultimate
WOMEN
OF THE YEAR

WITH 88

Caroline Flack

After waltzing to victory on Strictly Come Dancing, Caroline Flack, 36, landed TV's hottest job: co-presenting The X Factor with pal Olly Murs

Dressing up as a banana for kids' TV was the closest I've come to disaster. I looked in the mirror and thought, 'What am I doing?' But every job leads to another, and I went on to co-present Gladiators. I used to watch TV as a kid and wonder how I could get into that world. It was the only job I ever wanted. You do it because you love it; not to say, 'Hey, look at me!' The day I bought my first flat was a proud moment. I did it by myself - it took ages. When I got the keys I lay on the floor, thinking, 'I did this'. Before Strictly I kept my feelings locked up. My dance partner Pasha taught me to be more open and I surprised myself. I took myself less seriously and gained confidence. Work is not my life. You have to separate the two. Things happen every now and then, like a friend being upset, to remind you that getting a line wrong isn't so bad. It's a lot harder being a woman on TV. We have to face more criticism. I have a private message group with Dawn O'Porter, Gemma Cairney, Laura Whitmore and Gizzi Erskine, and we support each other. The X Factor has made me realise how strong I am. The show elicits strong opinions, and often they aren't nice. But you can't let it get to you. People don't have to like you.



Captain Hannah Winterbourne

Hannah, 28, is the highest-ranking transgender soldier in the British Army. Assigned male at birth, Hannah spent eight years training with the Army before bravely revealing her plans to transition in 2013.

I knew early on I wasn't comfortable in my own skin. I want to help the next generation who are struggling with themselves and show them they can get through it and be happy. There isn't a right way to transition. It takes a long time and we all have to go through it in our own way. I want to empower others to think they can do it too. I feared losing everyone I cared about - as well as my credibility. I worried all these privileges I'd earned would disappear after I told people who I really was. Finding the courage to reveal my decision to everyone I knew was hard. I'd come to terms with who I was, but their perception of me felt like a huge part of my identity. I've had many people tell me, 'I'm finally myself'. Working with transgender charity Mermaids and LGB&T Sport Cymru means I've helped make that possible, and those moments make everything worthwhile. You're never alone, even if you feel like you are. There's always somebody you can reach out to and connect with.

Meltem Avcil >

In 2007, six years after fleeing Turkey for the UK, Meltem and her mother, who are Kurdish, were detained for three months at Yarl's Wood immigration centre. After her release, Meltem successfully campaigned with the charity Women For Refugee Women to stop children being detained there. Now 22, she's fighting to get the centre shut down altogether.

I want to help remove negative associations with

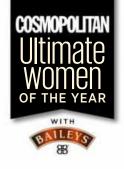
the word 'refugee'. I wish people here had more sympathy. It shouldn't have to be this way.

People need to understand that refugees don't come here for no reason. When my mum and I were detained, I was just 13. Mum didn't speak any English and so she became my responsibility. But I couldn't understand the rules and regulations of the detainment, and that was frightening.

I couldn't move on with my life knowing that a place like Yarl's Wood exists. I was lucky enough to be out of there, but I had to do something to help others less fortunate. I was told that speaking out about your experiences makes you vulnerable, but I've learnt being honest helps, rather than hinders, you.







Sajda Mughal 🕨

In 2005 Sajda, now 33, was on the Tube during the 7/7 London bombings. She's since dedicated her life to preventing extremism and radicalisation in the UK, and is director of the women's charity Jan Trust.

I don't want to have to explain what Islamophobia is to my daughters. After 7/7 there was such an increase in hostility, especially towards women in headscarves. As a Muslim, I know what those terrorists did goes against everything I was brought up to believe is right.

The bombing left me with questions. How could it have been prevented? Knowing I've stopped children being radicalised or going to Syria feels amazing.

People told me that, as an ethnic-minority woman, I wouldn't get far in life. And lots of people have tried to stop me doing what I do. I've had death threats and hate mail, but that's just made me more determined

than ever to support vulnerable people.



Ultimate Inspiration MY ULTIMATE WOMAN IS... KATIE PIPER She's an incredible role model with a brilliantly strong character – just how a woman should be.

94 · COSMOPOLITAN

Katie Cutler

Katie, 22, raised £330,000 in just 21 days on behalf of Alan Barnes, a disabled man who was brutally attacked outside his house. She's now launched The Katie Cutler Foundation to help vulnerable people through acts of kindness.

Helping Alan made me realise my potential. Seeing how much one normal person like me could achieve, I felt I needed to do more and become more. It changed my life. I've learnt to trust myself. Now, I listen to my gut, worry less about superficial things and focus on why I helped Alan in the first place. I just wanted to make a difference. Every charity or business starts as one tiny idea. It's about taking small, practical steps to make it happen.

The more I help others, the smaller my problems seem.

My life isn't perfect; I have bills to pay and a family to support, but focusing on other people's struggles reminds me how much I do have. I've worked since I was 12, and want to teach my daughter that life doesn't come easily. I was pregnant at 18 and I'm determined to prove you can still have children at a young age and succeed. •

REAL LIFE WINNERS. AS TOLD TO KARA GODFREY AND SOPHIE GODDARD. PHOTOGRAPHS ANTONIO PETRONZIO. HAIR AND MAKEUP VICTORIA BARNES, USING DHC, AND MATACHA SCHMITT, STITURIG JARDE GEREN, HANNHA-PERSS, WHISTIELS, MATELEN FOR TOOK, TROUGHES, A OTHAR STORIES, GALMARCO LORERNZI. AND MATACHA STORIES, SALDA, TOP; SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SALDA, SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SALDA, SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SALDA, SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SALDA, SKIRT, BOTH HAM, SALDA, SKIRT, BOTH SKIRT, SKIRT, BOTH SK

PLUS two return flights, courtesy of Travelopo.com

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CO3MOPOLITAN

AND A £500 beauty bag

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seven-night stay in a luxury villa (including your very own private pool), thanks to Travelopo, Europe's leading holiday rentals agency. You'll also receive a bumper bag of high-end beauty treats worth a whopping £500, so you can pamper yourself before you hit the beach.

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Terms and conditions: Open to UK residents aged 18+. Survey must be completed by 31 December 2015. Holiday comprises a seven-night stay at a two-bed villa in Mallorca (in/around Pollença) with a private pool, worth at least £1,200, plus two return flights. Villa may be up to four-bed, subject to availability. Extra guests must pay for flights. The prize is valid for April, May, June, September or October 2016, excluding half terms and bank holidays, subject to availability. All other costs (transfers, food, activities) not included. Beauty Bag prize contains products chosen by Cosmopolitan to a minimum value of £500. A winner will be chosen at random after 31 December 2015. The editor's decision is final. Hearst reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions: see them in full at Hearst.co.uk/terms-and-conditions.



ENDS, NOT MY PERIOD. New*Always Ultra. Up to 100% leak protection. Stay out till sunrise with new Always Ultra. Its super absorbent core has liquid locking gel, and gel can't leak. Remember, great stories don't happen when you stay in. Also available in Liners. always always always

STRETCH YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND...



FAT'S NOT HARD TO SWALLOW...

In the past 18 months fat has gone from being nutritional pariah to dieter's best friend. But are you ready to start drinking the stuff too? Fat water - regular H2O with droplets of coconut oil - is the latest craze about to hit our fridges. So why the hell would we drink that, you might be wondering. Good question. Turns out it gives gym-goers a massive hit of hydration and energy. And at a mere 26 calories and 2g fat per serving, there's fat chance it'll do any damage to your thigh circumference, either.



for 15 seconds and move on to the next. Complete

the full circuit three

30 seconds, then rest

Do each move for

imes through. As your

fitness grows, work up to five

Trainer HOLLIE GRANT shows you how to send your party-season paunch packing

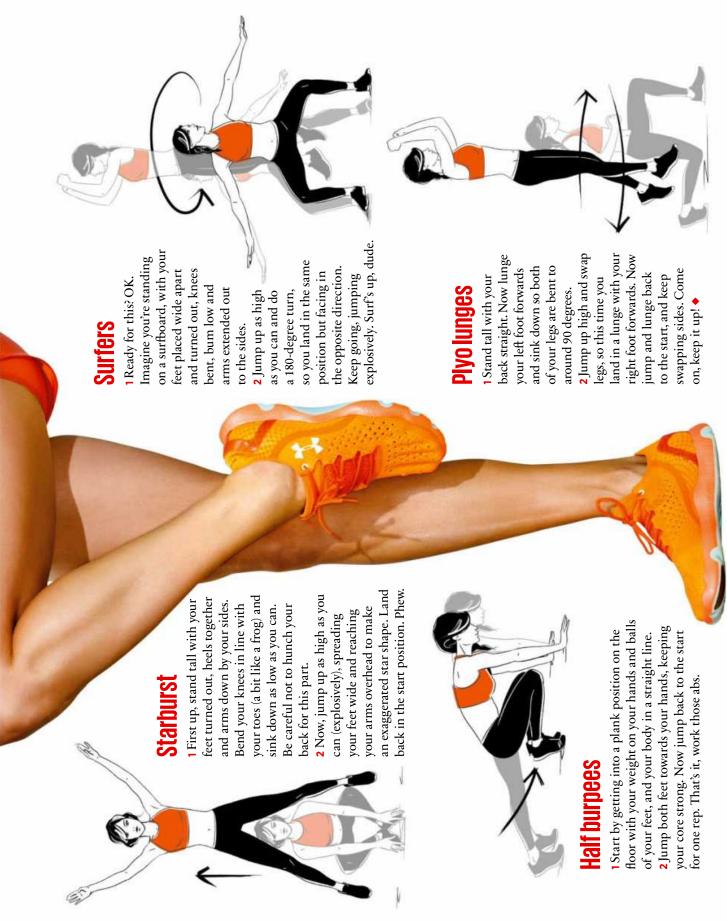
that takes up residence between the top button of your jeans and your mid-section sometime between 30 November and 1 January. The lethal combination of alcohol (which is basically just sugar in a glass), fat-rich food and a lack of sleep that the party season brings can only be tackled with one thing: intense, muscle-targeting cardio. Hollie Grant, founder of The Model Method workout (Themodelmethod.co.uk), is the queen of HIIT (that's high-intensity interval training) and has devised this killer five-move plan to blast your party wobble into submission. Ready to sweat? Course you are! Let's go...

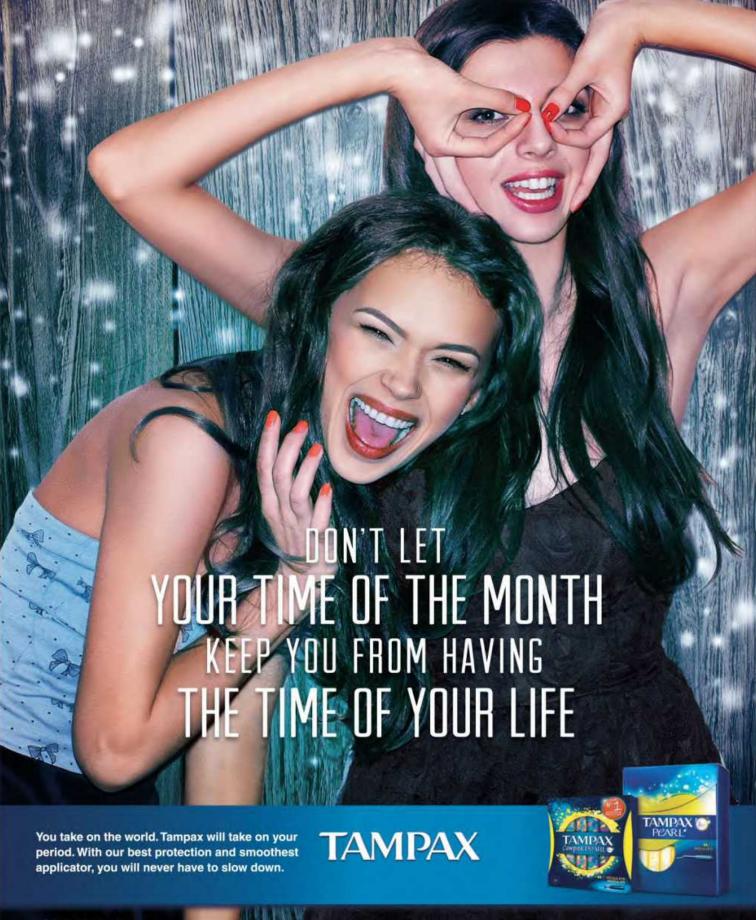
1 Start with your feet hip-distance apart, standing up tall.

Floor to ceiling

2 Bend your knees and sink down low enough to touch the floor with your fingertips. Jump up as high as you can and reach to touch the ceiling. Maintaining a high tempo, go straight back down to the floor. Bet *that*³ got your heart pumping...

PHOTOGRAPH TRUNKARCHIVE.COM, DOMINIQUE BADER. ILLUSTRATIONS LIZZY THOMAS













Body warmer, £70, Adidas StellaSport

Jacket, £90.99, Björn Borg

RUNFOR

Want practical sportswear that's goodlooking enough for your journey to and from the gym? We've got you covered





Jacket, £80, Roxy





Jacket, £160, Nike

GETTING TECHNICAL

Different fabrics can help you cool off or keep warm depending on your needs. Yoga cool-down? Stretchy, fitted fabric such as polyester or spandex will wick away sweat. Just finished your cardio? You want a jacket containing wool (nature's performance fabric) to regulate heat, and nylon to absorb sweat.

Another happy morning in New Pampers Baby-Dry Pants



day ahead.

YOUR HEALTHY It's got fruit! It's got nuts!

It's got to be better than a chocolate bar... right? Not exactly. Luckily, we've found some healthy alternatives



NATURE VALLEY OATS & HONEY CRUNCHY GRANOLA (42a)

Sugar 11.9g Total fat 7.2a (1g saturated) Calories 192

Protein 3.4a

Key ingredients Oats, sugar,

sunflower oil The reality Yes, its ingredients are mostly recognisable. but a Starbar has more protein. With only 2g fibre, you'll be hitting the biscuit tin within minutes. Swap it for Quest

Bar Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough. Only sounds naughty - it has less sugar and is actually higher in protein than a chicken breast.



NAKD CASHEW COOKIE (35g)

Sugar 13.7g Total fat 8.2g (1.6g saturated) Calories 143 Protein 3.5q

Kev ingredients Cashews, dates

The reality It may seem high in the white stuff, but this sugar comes from cold-pressed dates, so it's full of antioxidants. As healthy as anything you'd make at home. Swap it for Whole fruit and nuts will have more fibre, but hey, live a little!



TREK PROTEIN **BERRY BURST BAR** (55g)

Sugar 24.5g Total fat 1.6q (0.2g saturated) Calories 177

Protein 10g **Key ingredients**

Dates, raisins, soya protein, fruit-juice concentrates

The reality If you were scaling Ben Nevis this would be a great pick-me-up. but with almost 2.5 times the sugar of a Krispy Kreme donut, it's far too sugary for a desk snack. Swap it for With a 11:6 sugar-to-protein ratio, 9bar Cashew

& Cocoa is a better

shout al desko.



BOUNCE PEANUT PROTEIN BLAST

BALL (49g) Sugar 12g

Total fat 8g (1.1g saturated)

Calories 207

Protein 14a **Key ingredients**

Peanuts, brown rice malt syrup, whey protein

The reality With a big dose of protein, this seems like the perfect post-gym snack. The brownrice syrup releases energy slowly to avoid a sugar spike. **Swap it for** Bounce Cacao Mint Protein Bomb. Less sugar;



still full of protein.

BEOND ORGANIC AÇAÍ BERRY (35g)

Sugar 15.2g Total fat 6.3g (3.6g saturated) Calories 142 Protein 3g

Key ingredients

Raw dates, raw cashews, date syrup The reality It claims



to be one of your five-a-day, but it's got 4tsp sugar more than most. Swap it for Pulsin' Maple & Peanut Protein Snack contains around half the sugar, plus pea protein isolates help to rebalance your blood sugar after you've eaten it.



EAT NATURAL DARK CHOCOLATE FRUIT & NUT BAR

(45g) **Sugar** 18.3g Total fat 11.1g (6.4g saturated) Calories 215 Protein 2.1g Key ingredients Dark chocolate, coconut, sultanas, syrup The reality The chocolate and nuts are full of energyboosting magnesium (not to mention delicious), but this is also high in sugar, with almost as much fat as a box of chicken nuggets. Swap it for Rhythm 108 Banana Muffin.

WHAT'S SEX LIKE FOR A 20-SOMETHING WOMAN TODAY?

Very complicated...

Hooking up has long been a formative part of most twenty-somethings' sexual experience. But as alarming figures emerge of sexual assaults on campus, the dynamics of casual sex have become more complex. Jennifer Savin, 23 (right), investigates the issue of consent



underwear and lying on a bed with Alex*, a man I've been seeing for almost three weeks and am yet to sleep with. But we both know there's only one way this date is ending. I'm up for what's coming next but, first, I've got to do a bit of paperwork - run through a Consensual Sex Agreement contract, to be precise - to check I'm not misreading any of his signals (including a hard-on as big as Kanye's ego) and to assure him I feel the same way he does.

'm down to my

The contract is part of an initiative from the Affirmative Consent Project – an American online database of articles about sexual consent and assault, set up to create more awareness about consent in the wake of a year of 'sexual assault on campus' hysteria.

It's a serious, passion-killing business and comes as part of a 'consent kit', which comprises a condom, two mints (so you can 'stop and take a breather before deciding if you want to continue') and a contract that urges both parties to declare they agree to sex. If that's not enough to extinguish any ember of desire that might still be alive at this point, the contract also encourages both parties to take a selfie holding the signed piece of paper – Instagramming is, I imagine, optional.

The kits are available online for \$2.99 (around £2 – a bargain: burn your sex life to the ground for less than a side of Nando's spicy rice) and come in a pocket-size hessian pouch.

I'm sceptical. While these kits appear well-meaning and certainly initiate an important conversation, they also create an environment that's about as sexy as licking an envelope. Plus they raise the question: are the ethics of sex really so complex that we're now resorting to covering our backs with a contract, lest we be



accused – or accuse someone – of something sinister in the morning?

Still, I lean over the side of the bed and semi-discreetly fish out a consent kit from the bottom of my bag (I have five lurking down there and have nicknamed them the Sex Bags of Doom; they're ticking away like libido-slaying time bombs).

"Err... What are you doing?" Alex asks, holding up a condom he's already retrieved from his wallet. And suddenly, I'm not so sure myself...

RAPE CULTURE ON CAMPUS

Five years ago, an NUS report made a shocking discovery. It found that one in four female students had suffered an unwanted sexual experience at university, while one in seven had experienced a serious sexual or physical assault. Not long after, yet more reports emerged of predatory men behaving badly on campus and the union has been on red alert ever since. The media caught wind and took an interest, and panic spread beyond the four walls of education – last month the BBC Three documentary *Is This Rape? Sex On Trial* sparked a heated *Newsnight* debate that trickled into water-cooler conversations.

Meanwhile, in the US, a study of Florida State University's athletes revealed that, over the past five years, almost a fifth of all male football and basketball players at the school had been investigated as criminal suspects in alleged sex attacks. And yet it's perhaps the 23-year-old former Columbia University student, Emma



Sulkowicz (AKA 'mattress girl'), whose case garnered the most attention. Emma graduated carrying a 50lb

mattress to protest against the university's handling of her alleged rape by a fellow student. It also sparked international outrage over the way hearings deal with accusations of sexual assault, both on and off campus. Many praised Sulkowicz's actions – something the National Organization For Women recognised with an award. Others shredded her for allegedly making false accusations. But everyone agreed the system's method of handling sexual assault was flawed, failing both parties.

In the wake of such incidents, the phrases 'rape culture' and 'conscious

consent' started appearing everywhere, from Lena Dunham's Twitter feed to the White House. Barack Obama's recent It's On Us campaign calls his nation to arms, urging each citizen to change their attitudes towards sexual assault – and to see it as their personal responsibility to prevent further incidences occurring.

In an effort to educate students about sexual assault, British universities have started running consent workshops for freshers as part of a campaign called I Heart Consent. NUS women's officer Susuana Amoah says she hopes they will be mandatory for all students in three years' time (currently, most classes are voluntary).

In America, Alison Berke Morano, a 51-year-old political adviser to the Florida Democratic Party, is also doing her best to protect students. She is the woman behind the consent kits, having joined the Affirmative Consent

Project a year ago after two old friends (former college athletes, both male, who'd been moved by the news involving sports teams) came to her in the hope of building something positive out of depressing statistics. Berke Morano has since been asked by the White House to visit campuses

nationwide to discuss consent.

time bombs'

"The consensual-sex contracts were something we felt made perfect sense very early on," she explains. "We also learnt that the military and people in the entertainment field have been using consent contracts for years. Our contract is a fun way to remind people that they really should be talking about what they're getting themselves into. I remember feeling that pressure myself in college, but having no guidance – we need to change that."

Consent isn't something we're taught to discuss; sex education is

restricted largely to biology.

Negotiating respect within
relationships is something learnt
off-curriculum and it doesn't help
that glamorous movie sex (read:
the kind of sex we all aspire to be
having) is always silent and seamless
– and totally unrealistic.

But is a £2 consent kit the answer? Christina Hoff Sommers, author of The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism Is Harming Our Young Men and an outspoken critic well-known for her views on contemporary feminism, calls people like Berke Morano 'meddlesome'. "A sex contract is not a solution; it's a warning sign," Hoff Sommers says. "It tells us the rape-culture crusade is spinning out of control. Contracts will not protect either party from an accusation - and they certainly won't deter genuine predators. But they do cast an aura of fear and suspicion over intimacy."

A QUESTION OF YES OR NO

Ask around. Many of us have, at some point, felt opposed to a sexual situation. We surveyed almost 2,000 *Cosmopolitan* readers and discovered that 45% of you have felt pressured into having sex – despite having said no. And it gets murkier: 57% of these women didn't know whether to consider the experience a sexual violation, simply a bad hook-up or something else entirely.

I've had experiences where I've felt uncertain about – even opposed to – what's happening to my own body. But is that rape? I consider myself a smart, strong, empowered woman, but there have been times where I've gritted my teeth and stayed silent for an easier life. Especially at university.

Take bonfire night three years back. I'm 20 years old, and after a bottle of warm rosé on the beach with a music producer called Jay*, we agree to split a taxi home. He invites himself in for a drink and again, I agree. We kiss, and he wants to go further – but I'm not too sure. I say I want to wait >

more than once, but he persists. "We're halfway there, why stop?" he says.

I'm not forceful with my resistance - there's no kicking or screaming, we've both been drinking and my brain feels like a plate of scrambled eggs. A niggling voice in my head says, 'I owe him' (for what exactly, I'm not sure. His attention? The wine?) and eventually I stop protesting and let the situation play out. Halfway through the act he spits on me, and still I remain silent and attempt to disconnect my mind from what's happening to my body by counting in my head to the highest number I can reach. By the time it's all over, I've hit the seven-hundreds.

The next morning I get dressed and, because of my limited experience of one-night stands, accept his behaviour as typical. I deal with it by chalking it up to a 'learning curve' and reframing it in my mind as a 'funny story'. Unpleasant at the time, but hey. I tout the tale over drinks with friends, and Jay soon becomes a running joke among my circle: 'The rapper who couldn't spit bars, but who spat on me'.

I haven't thought about him, or that night, in years - and I don't feel especially scarred by the experience; just confused. I'm not unusual. I know dozens who've experienced similar cloudy scenarios with men who'd never consider themselves sexual predators – and would be horrified at the thought of being such a thing. But it begs the question, how do you differentiate between a 'bad hook-up' and actual rape? Are these scenarios, where men aren't aware they're overstepping the mark, a violation or a shitty part of growing up and exploring your sexual boundaries? And could a consent contract help navigate these grey areas?

CROSSING THE (DOTTED) LINE

"Someone could sign a contract and still go on to be sexually assaulted or raped. Although they aren't legally binding, a victim might feel less able to seek support or report an attack to the police for fear that a contract could work against them." This is Katie Russell speaking, the national spokesperson for the charity Rape Crisis England & Wales.

The law, too, is clear. "If a consent form was presented as evidence, it would be considered in exactly the same way as if the accused said that consent was given verbally," says Alison Saunders, director of public prosecutions for the Crown Prosecution Service, who spearheads another consent-related campaign on social media, #ConsentIs. She's passionate about the topic and supports the NUS' initiative to offer classes; her son has recently started university and Alison is impressed he's able to discuss the topic so eloquently with her.

I'm less articulate in raising the subject. I meet Sam* for a drink at a bar. We've always had a flirty friendship, which has on occasion culminated in us falling into bed together. Towards the end of the night, we step outside for a cigarette. "You've got ash in your hair," he tells me, brushing it away.

"Imagine we're back at mine," I begin. "We start fooling around, it's all good." He looks intrigued.

"Yeah...?"

"Then I say I've got something I need to ask you..."

He instantly looks worried and starts employing his nervous habit of stroking his beard while looking at his feet and nodding.

"I've got a sex contract I want us to sign – to say you agree to having sex with me and vice versa," I continue, bringing the little pouch out of my bag. "How would you react?"

Sam is my old boss, so I already know how much he hates paperwork – I fear it's unlikely he'll be into this particular piece of admin.

He laughs nervously. "That's hilarious, I reckon we'd have a proper laugh about that. But it would *totally*



ABOVE/RIGHT: Student protests during the sexual-assaulton-campus storm. BELOW: Emma Sulkowicz carried a mattress in protest at her alleged rapist being allowed to stay on campus by Columbia University







TOP: Reports on rape culture have been dominating the media. ABOVE: Student George Lawlor. BELOW: Lena Dunham showed her support for the NUS's I Heart Consent initiative on her Instagram feed



kill the mood and I wouldn't be able to perform," he says. Duly noted.

"So, back to mine then?" The kit goes back in my satchel.

"Not tonight, mate."

LEGAL-SEX EDUCATION

A week later, I find myself at Cambridge University just days before a new batch of freshers arrives. I'm here to discover more about consent workshops by joining a training session for older studentsturned-facilitators, who are eager to learn how best to discuss and teach a concept as nebulous as consent.

"There's an idea that women are either virgins or whores, and that men are purely sexual beings who, once aroused, are no longer in control – and we want to end that,"

says Charlotte Chorley, the Student Union's women's officer who's leading the session. She sits cross-legged on a desk and we squash in on leather sofas around her. The vibe is casual. Chorley goes on to explain that a lot of students are particularly confused about consent

when alcohol comes into the picture. "They can find it hard to grasp that even if a person says yes to sex, they may not actually be capable of making that decision if they're drunk."

Discussing coerced sexual experiences during the session nudges my mind to reflect on Jay again. I don't know if he realised how truly unsure I was about having sex with him. But I do believe he should have known better than to continue pressuring me until I relented; he should have cared about the signs. We both should've had the framework instilled in us somewhere along the line to know that it wasn't a healthy situation – there was no 'yes', enthusiastic or otherwise.

Perhaps a consent class would have made him aware that, just because I

had stopped pushing his hands away, I hadn't given him the thumbs-up. I'd just given up trying to dissuade him. The words 'unpleasant' and 'misguided' might be too weak to describe the situation, yet all the others I can think of feel too strong – for me, in this specific instance. Is there a gap in our language for describing that kind of sexual situation, or is lack of consent always classed as rape – black and white, no room for confusion?

We've moved on from the message 'no means no,' and students are taught that an 'enthusiastic yes' from both parties is the *only* green light in the bedroom. They're shown the Thames Valley Police's viral video, explaining the concept of consent is so simple, it's comparable to making a cup of tea. Someone could say they're thirsty, so

you whip up a pot of Earl Grey for them, but at the last minute they change their mind. That's OK. It's *never* OK, however, to force the tea on someone who doesn't want it.

Saunders explains that the law is also straightforward when it comes to defining consent: "An obvious case

of sexual assault would be a woman getting dragged off the street and into the bushes; everybody understands that to be wrong." The addition of substances such as drugs or alcohol can be confusing, yet the legislation remains clear, she continues: "When prosecuting, we say, 'Did the suspect have reasonable belief that consent was being given in the correct circumstances - for example, free from pressure, emotional abuse or dependency (whether that's on love, drugs or money), and with capacity of mind?' If you're beyond a certain level of intoxication, where you're unable to think clearly for yourself, then you're unable to give sexual consent.

"The issue is that for too long we have blamed victims, usually women, >

for allowing themselves to be raped; and we have forgiven perpetrators, usually men, for acting on some kind of instinct from which they must be protected. The law is clear, and has

'Rape-culture

empowering.

it's infantilising'

panic isn't

been since 2003, that if one person does not consent to sexual activity and the other person doesn't reasonably believe there is consent, then it is an offence."

Hoff Sommers is also vocal on the questions the class raised for me. "This rape-culture panic does not empower

women – it infantilises them," she says. "Young women are learning to think of themselves as fragile maidens, preyed upon by lascivious men. Bad, drunken and regretted sex are being redefined as sexual violence – provided the accuser is female. This is fainting-couch feminism, not liberation."

It's a sexual minefield, and one that's even more confusing for young men who have grown up on porn, according to Dr Gail Dines, a professor of sociology and women's studies at Wheelock College in Boston and author of Pornland: How Porn Has Hijacked Our Sexuality. "Your average male today has porn as his main sex education, where women say, 'Yes, yes and yes' to every cruel act some dickhead porn director thinks up," she says. "He then has to undo what he's learnt from porn when he zips up his jeans and enters the real world; women don't always like to be fucked every which way, and they won't always consent. Real life is very different from Pornhub.com."

AGAINST STUDENTS' CONSENT

But not all students are on board with the idea of introducing real-life consent education; a poll by student news site The Tab found that only 39% felt it was necessary.

One student from the University of Warwick, George Lawlor, went so far

as to protest against the classes during October's Fresher's Week by holding up a sign proclaiming, 'This is not what a rapist looks like'. His piece, Why I Don't Need Consent Lessons, argues,

'Self-appointed teachers of consent: get off your fucking high horse. I don't need your help to understand basic human interaction.' It promptly caused a media shitstorm.

"The classes are too little, too late for people who have got to university age and still don't know the

difference between right and wrong," says Lawlor when I speak to him over the phone. "I don't want to sound like I'm victim-blaming or excusing rape in any way – rape is always the fault

of the rapist – but women in scenarios where they feel pressured *have* to say something. It's like locking your door at night; if you get burgled, it's not your fault, but that doesn't mean you couldn't have taken preventive measures."

I explain that this isn't always an option. Sometimes your vocal cords get frostbite; sometimes you know resistance is pointless.

"Then maybe classes ought to teach people how to say no, rather than how not to rape," he suggests.

I put the phone down and massage my temples. If Lawlor's key argument is that a consent class feels condescending or pointless, then it's just not strong enough. Spending 60 minutes engaging in a healthy discussion about consent is never going to be a waste of time.

CLAUSE AND EFFECT

So, what happened in my contract test-run with Alex? Well, I bottled it. The truth is, while writing this piece led me to seriously re-examine my sexual history (something I had never imagined happening when I took on the assignment), I fast realised a piece of paper cannot protect you, but it *can* spark a necessary conversation.

Ultimately, the consent class gave me an important reminder; schooling in a lesson that, retrospectively, seems very obvious: my body doesn't owe *anyone* a damn thing, regardless of whether they're someone I've invited over (sober or drunk), shagged a thousand

times before or with whom I've spent a whole night flirting. If you consent to one act, you haven't given automatic consent to another. Change your mind whenever you like – it's your vagina's god-given right.

So, I stopped stalling. What's the point in scrabbling around for a biro and asking Alex to sign the boner-killing elephant hiding in the room, when I've already very clearly consented through my body language? And when he's done the same through his? For me, that is *more* than enough - no signature required. • If you've been affected

by the issues raised in this piece, find support at Rapecrisis.org.uk.

YOU SHARE...

We asked you, the Cosmopolitan readers, to share your views – and continue the discussion

"Women need to feel more empowered when it comes to sex and consent. Teenage years are often a blur of 'Who am I doing this for?' Both sexes need to be educated from a younger age about their rights and social pressures."

"I was raped five years ago. What haunts me most is that I'm not sure he thinks what he did to me was rape."

"Lads, if a girl says yes once, it doesn't mean you have an all-access pass whenever you want, even if you're in a relationship, married or messing around. Both individuals need to be willing every time they have sex."

"I said no over and over, but when he asked why, I froze and didn't know what excuse to give. I was 17 at the time. Now I've learnt that no is enough – I don't need to explain myself."



WHAT

Even if your vision is 20/20, it's all about the right pair of frames this season. But what does this mean for your makeup? Get it right and the boys will make passes at girls who wear glasses...

SPECTACLE!

WORDS Ingeborg van Lotringen STYLING Shelly Vella PHOTOGRAPHS Peter Pedonomou





Geek chic

Glasses accentuate any imperfections, so keep your makeup neat and pay close attention to detail. "Minimal eyes with perfectly groomed brows and lips complement these retro specs beautifully," says our makeup artist Kenneth Soh. "The shortcut to making eyes stand out is to accentuate the top lashline with liquid liner smudged between the lashes. Follow with a long-wear mascara and curl lashes to prevent them smudging your lenses. Create three-dimensional brows by shaping them with powder, filling gaps with pencil and grooming with gel. Bring your look to life with a lip colour that wows, applied neatly with a lip brush."

Statement colour

Pair bright makeup with bright specs if you're bold enough but never match your makeup colours to your frames. "Like matching your bag to your shoes, it's a bit naff," says Kenneth (see: the Middletons.) "Bold under-eye liner sits right in the middle of your frames, so it's a real focus point. Sky blue brightens eyes and forms a bold but elegant contrast with red frames. Work cream or pencil liner along the top lashes, smudge outwards with a brush, then take it under the lower lashes. If your eyes curve downwards, skip the under-eye line and elongate the outer corners instead. Finish with pink - not red! - on lips."









Make Up For Ever Aqua Smoky Lash Waterproof Extra Black Mascara, £17 Perkins. Glasses, £270, Paul

By Lotho >



This party season look as foxy as you feel, naturally.

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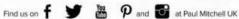


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Discover how your beauty routine can make a positive difference to your day

Sometimes it's the little things that make the biggest difference. After a long day at the office, often all you can think about is getting home, but a quick swipe of your favourite lipstick and you're ready for anything! Your beauty habits are more than a routine – they are instant mood-lifters, and with our hectic lives we all deserve a daily beauty boost.

THE THOUGHT

Meet B. – the creator of the Beauty Boost concept. B. is exclusive to Superdrug, and it believes that beauty should have a positive impact on your day-to-day life, because when you feel good, you can face anything. B. products provide instant happiness boosts, are cruelty-free and suitable for vegans, plus they offer top-quality products with high-end ingredients, at great value for money.

THE MAKEUP ARTIST

With more than 15 years experience as a makeup artist, Cassie Lomas is in demand. Her talents have helped her build an impressive client list, and she has worked with everyone from Lady Gaga to Twiggy. Cassie has now turned her talents to teaching the makeup artists of the future, in her newly opened Cassie Lomas

Makeup Academy. We caught up with Cassie to discover her top beautyboost tips. "When my skin looks good, it gives me an instant happiness boost, that's why I love fresh, healthy looking skin," she says. "If I've had a late night, I will always reach for a highlighter the next morning, to give my skin the glow it's lacking." An instant glow? Surely that's worth skipping your snooze button for! We asked Cassie to share some of her favourite B. products, so you can give your makeup bag a makeover - ready for your daily dose of beauty boosts.

'CHOOSING A MATT-TEXTURE LIPSTICK GIVES **ASTRONGER** LIP LINE,



THE SPONGE

Blending Sponge, £4.99 "I hate the look of heavy makeup on skin, which is why I love this sponge. It blends your foundation effortlessly, while also allowing you to build coverage where it's needed. The tear-drop shape also helps you to easily reach all the contours of your face."



'MULTI-PURPOSE PRODUCTS ARE GREAT WHEN YOU'RE SHORT ONTIME.

THE WIPES

Sensitive Micellar Cleansing Wipes,

£3.99 "If you need a quick cleanse, there is no better way to freshen up your skin than with a micellar face wipe. These are both hydrating and thick, so give the ultimate luxury feel."



THE FLUSH OF COLOUR

B. Sculpted Blush & Highlight Stick, £10.99 "Multi-purpose products are great when you're short on time, and this dual blush and highlighter will revive your cheeks in an instant. My favourite shade is 'light', it's a gorgeous peachy tone."

Sensitive Micellar Cleansing Wipes Anti-blemish

THE LIPSTICK Matte Lipstick, £7.99

Switching to one of the four shades of B. matt lipsticks is the perfect way to update your makeup bag, as Cassie explains. "Choosing a matt-texture gives a stronger lip line with ultimate hold."



Primer, £9.99 "I love that this primer combines makeup and skincare in one. If you have oily skin this will be your new best friend. Not only will it help extend the wear time of your makeup, it's salicylic acid will prevent breakouts too."

B. Prepared Anti Blemish

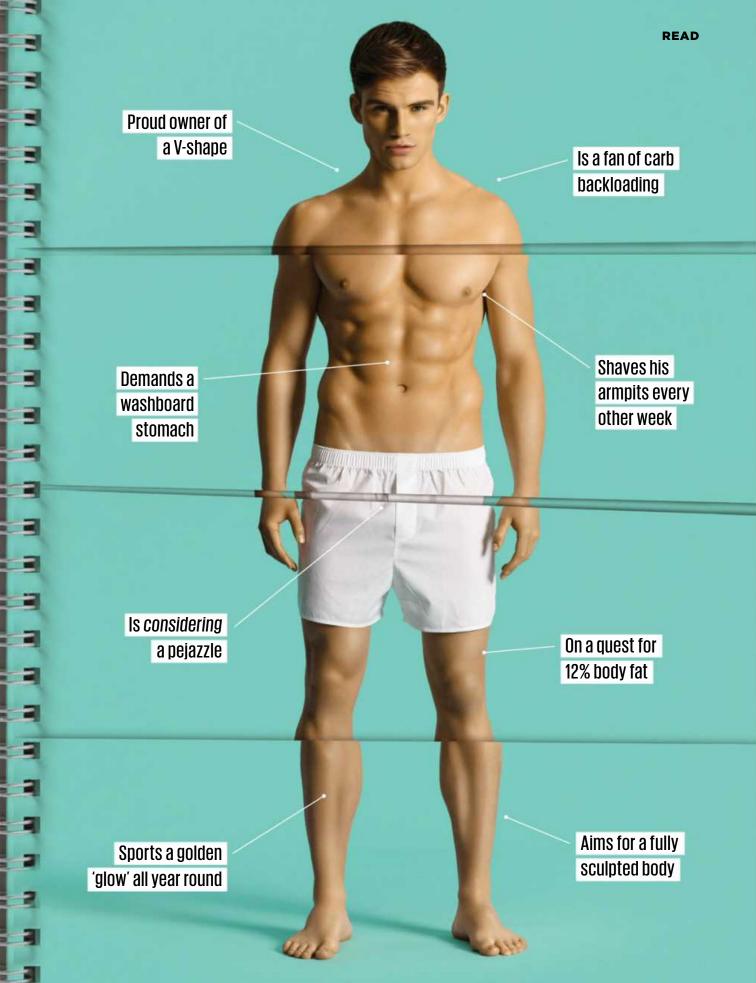
THE PRIMER





Pumped, plucked and preened to perfection—this new man practises extreme vanity, declaring war on fat and body hair. Alex Harris investigates the rise of the 'spornosexual'

E



anity is the healthiest thing in life." So said fashion mogul Karl Lagerfeld. And he's a man more than equipped to comment on such matters, what with having lived on Diet Coke for the best

part of the past decade (and dropping half his entire body weight in the process). But four strictly Paleo weeks into my pre-holiday diet and I'm struggling to agree. My body fat is plummeting (result!). My abs are reappearing (get in!). But all I can think about is cheeseburgers.

Think I'm crazy? Or at least in the minority? Here's the thing: I'm not.

Because man's collective behaviour is changing. Where once the excesses of male vanity were deemed metrosexual, now the game has been upped. We've put down the frappés and picked up protein shakes. We've tightened our T-shirts, bought a spray-tan subscription and dropped a quarter of a month's wages at the juice bar. The '90s are over. The metrosexual is dead. Long live the spornosexual.

Mark Simpson came up with that term, by the way. He's the author who also predicted back in 1994 that men would be partial to moisturisers, lattes and the 'edgier' section of Topman if left to their own devices. He called us metrosexuals – the sort of men who were in touch with their feelings and understood the power of a good eye cream. What he's predicting now, however, is a whole lot scarier – and if you look around, you can see it everywhere.

Mark's latest coinage sums up man's realisation that there's some OCD joy to be found below the neck too. The metro had been missing out. If the late-'90s/early-'00s man was focused on skin and face, the modern spornosexual defines himself by his body. What does he want to look like? Imagine a sports-star/porn-star hybrid





- tight, toned and plucked to within an inch of his life. That.

"Spornosexuality is secondgeneration, sexed-up, body-centred metrosexuality," Mark tells me. Which is the beginning of a very scary conversation indeed...

Body of evidence

That's right, we now care more about our bodies than you do about yours. Man is anxious about his skin and worried about his fat bits. Along with a clear complexion, we want good

posture and better pecs. I know I do. As do most of my friends. But I deplore sunbeds, have a laissez-faire approach to grooming and fancy myself as lumberjack material. I'm a real man.

Like every good feature on male vanity, this one begins on a beach in Italy. An email from the

editor introduces me to the term spornosexual and I instantly find deep flaws in my 'real man' supposition.

My close friend and I arrive at the beach at 9AM for a 'tanning day'. That's verbatim, and I hate myself for it. Scene: our towels are turned to face the sun. Both of us have trimmed our body hair before departing the UK to ensure maximum bronzing potential. I notice that my friend has

also trimmed his armpit hair and regret taking on this commission, because it's making me notice things like my mate's trimmed armpit hair. What was meant to be relaxation has turned into research. Day one, and no small amount of soul-searching.

I contact Mark and ask him to clarify the sporno. "Anything he wears is likely to be form-hugging, because his own body is the ultimate accessory - fashioned through thousands of hours of sweaty labour into a hot commodity." I know plenty who'd fit

> that description. "He's tanned, inked, depilated and possibly pierced. His body is shredded and 'swole' [that's 'buff', if you were wondering] and as sculpted as his hair. He is never really naked as, like an adult-industry star, he is designed to be viewed nude."

As I vow never to mess with my body hair again, I decide I don't fully fit that description. (If you're struggling to conjure up an image of this man, google 'Gaz Geordie Shore'.)

But is the orange crotch-thrust of a man your search engine throws up a true representation of all men, or at least where we're headed? Can that oversexed washboard really be the future? Your fella's future? My future? I desire a set of six below my shirt as much as the next desk jockey, but what about the V-shaped back, huge guns and ultra-tight T-shirts?

Indeed, TV isn't always a reflection of real life. For every self-obsessed sunbed acolyte there's still a hairychested family man, surely?

After my first conversation with Mark, I start looking around me; at my friend's obvious V-shaped back - a result of something called carb backloading, which involves saving them for later in the day; at my body, which I was pleased to take below 11% body fat before the holiday >

'We're worried about our complexions and fat hits'

SAY HELLO TO THE CELEBRITY SPORNOS



MARK Essex boy Mark is ready-sculpted for a sexy selfie



RONALDO ad. Google it and gawp



ZAC **Groomed to** is a long way tight-fitting tee



GAZ Gaz Beadle has near-perfected shade (Orange

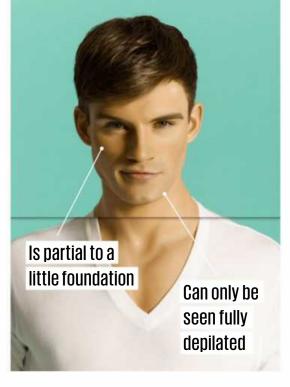
Spornosex sells

Why now? What has happened to create such a man? Mark believes it's the after-effect of consumer culture's realisation that men, as much as women before us, can now be seen as objects in need of improvement.

It's a victory for advertising. It's what happened when Dolce & Gabbana weaponised David Gandy's bulge. When The West branded it like Beckham. When companies such as Braun declared war on body hair. Men were all of a sudden being told they had to look a certain way. Athletes were fetishised, with their unattainable abdominals and impossible haircuts. All this underpinned by the constant, niggling pull of internet porn, tugging its way into our collective consciousness: no body hair, no rules, all muscle. We had no chance.

This is why your Instagram feed is likely a semi-pornographic scroll of man-flesh selfies and gym progress shots. According to Mark, the poster campaigns in which stars including Ronaldo appeared in their pants, legs apart, on the sides of buses, helped raise a generation of young men for whom self-objectification was not only normal, but positively heroic.

The internet and social media are obvious spornosexual playgrounds – but the phenomenon is also evidenced in the street-strutting flesh. It's easy to wonder, while staring at the pale, plastic chest of a V-neck-wearing Topman mannequin, who on earth would buy such a garment. Then



you visit Essex. The North. Wales. In all their well-defined glory. Pecs and guns are a man's tits. And the lads are getting them out for your appraisal.

A man's place in society

I'm a 28-year-old man from a workingclass town in Wales. Which, Mark tells

me, makes me very a high sporno risk indeed. Turns out geography is a key factor. After Thatcher dismembered the mining industry, men were equally castrated. Those chaps in the de-industrialised parts of the country were left in a muscly imbroglio, their manual bodies having been made redundant in the '80s. This, says Mark, was later settled in the gym (which may explain why my stepfather is now to be found deadlifting on the regular). "Instead of working on someone's property,

down the pit or at the shipyard, you now work on your own body – which you then try to sell. Or get a shag." Which is why a spray-tan-overuse cautionary tale such as Gaz was ever able to wash up on Geordie shores.

But man's collective giving-a-shit when it comes to appearance can't be that much of a bad thing, can it? After all, we know that working out boosts mood and concentration. Nearly seven years of my career were spent as one of the editors of *Men's Health* – our ethos was always function first, aesthetics later. Yes, I've seen attempts at building a hulking frame to be later varnished in the tanning salon, 100% vanity-driven. But I've also seen amateur athletes who happen to buy hair wax. Men who have big arms because they want to be strong.

During the closing moments of our holiday, I tell my friend about the piece I'm writing and that I've included some of his behaviours. He bristles. Not because he's embarrassed, but because he's scared. Because our greatest fear is not that people judge

> our bodies, but that people know we care so much about them. Especially women. And that's the crisis we face, we teenage/twenties/ thirties men who aren't full-blown spornos. Society tells us to look a certain way, yet prevailing stereotypes of manliness force us to do everything we can to hide our attempts. It's a paradoxical mess of six-packs and shame. A case of vanity denial. And that doesn't seem like the healthiest thing in life from where I'm standing.

HOW SPORNO IS YOUR MAN?

- Has he asked for a Philips Bodygroom for Christmas?
- Are his V-necks and cleavage bigger than yours?
- Is he on a low-carb/lowsugar/no-wheat kick?
- ... or has he started claiming intolerances to them?
- Are his bits more extensively depilated than yours?
- Has he started asking what the difference is between a matt and a semi-matt foundation?
- Does he talk about V-shapes and T-shapes after the gym?
- Have you forgotten what his natural skin colour is like?

Ticked three or more boxes?
Your man is a full-blown sporno!

Stay party-SMOOTH

Gillette Venus ambassador Emma Willis shares her expert tips on keeping winter skin in check and staying smooth this party season

When temperatures take a plunge in the run-up to party season, our everyday skincare routine requires an overhaul. Many people find their skin more sensitive and difficult to manage in the colder months, but by introducing a few clever pampering hacks into your daily routine, your legs won't have to lose their smooth this winter.

PREP

"My beautician tells me to shower using warm, rather than really hot water," says Emma. "Apparently when water is too hot it dries out your skin." And for super-smooth results, Emma also recommends soaking in the bath for five minutes before shaving, to hydrate and soften the hair.

THE RAZOR

Emma's bathroom beauty secret is Venus Embrace Sensitive. "I used to be wary about shaving in the winter, when my skin feels more sensitive, but this razor really made a difference," she says. "It's been specially designed to smooth winter skin with five blades and this little moisture strip for less feel of irritation." The razor was rated an average of 4.6 stars by Boots customers*, with one saying, "I could hardly feel the blades – it glided across my skin, and over and around every curve without a problem, leaving my legs lovely and silky-smooth!"

WINTER SKIN

"For an extra winter glow, I love to use a moisturiser that's packed with vitamin C," Emma reveals. "Whether it's on my face or my legs, it really helps my skin feel soft in spite of the freezing temperatures." So now you've armed yourself with plenty of winter skin confidence, it's time to enjoy party season without letting the cold weather cramp your style... * Get Gillette Venus Embrace Sensitive Razor half price in Boots**

















JOGGING PANT

Once the uniform of couch potatoes everywhere, now a totally respectable work silhouette for your lower half.

Coat, £298; jumper, £98; shirt, £79; trousers, £79, all Jigsaw. Trainers, £50, Converse. Bag, £168, Marie Turnor >







THE HALF-KNIT SWEATER

Is it a sweatshirt?
Is it a knit? No, it's the perfect sartorial hybrid for those who get a bit hot and bothered in full-on wool.

Jumper, £430, Michaela Buerger at Matches Fashion. Jumpsuit, £404, Ginger & Smart. Trainers, £55, Puma at Asos >







You haven't taken a lunch break in two months. You've filed your boss's emails under 'NMFP'. And, come to think of it, you wish *everyone* in the office would go to hell... Sound familiar? If pressure's done a number on your passion for work, you could be suffering from the stress pandemic of our generation





hen Liz gets into work on a Monday morning, she passes a group of colleagues perched on the edge of a desk, trading stories about their weekends. They smile nervously and wave their hands in recognition of her arrival. She doesn't smile back. Instead she walks on, jaws clenched and fists wound into tight balls of frustration.

She sits down and starts unpacking the work she has spent all weekend doing. She thinks back to her own weekend – 48 hours of work/sleep punctuated only by the arrival of a takeaway and the two minutes she spent posting, 'Tm alive – but don't expect to hear from me anytime soon' on Facebook to quell the concerned texts from friends and family who haven't seen her in months. And suddenly she resents them all – their laughter is a hammer blow against her exhausted bones. Bang, bang, BANG...

KEEPING UP WITH DEMAND

Liz, by the way, doesn't run the company. She's a commercial controller, only 36 years old, and up until five months ago she loved her job and the people with whom she spent her working day. But then she took on a new role, and the demands began to pile up. As she was expected to manage a new team under increasing pressure, the passion burnt away, colleagues' laughter became irritating and lunch

breaks became something only the weak allowed themselves to take. Without realising it, Liz had become tired, hostile and cynical. And she couldn't see a way out...

'Burnout' has become the watchword of our generation; a term casually tossed out to express the bone-tiredness that many of us feel at some point, living as we do in a 24/7-connected world. But the dark truth is, it's far more insidious.

"It goes way beyond exhaustion – burnt-out people tend to develop a negative, depersonalised response to their job and everyone in it, and at the core of that is cynicism," says Christina Maslach, professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, who is considered one of the world's experts on the subject.

"It's not just about somebody thinking, 'I dislike my job and can't stand my boss'. It's a response to chronic stressors such as ethical conflict, a lack of respect and unfairness. If you're working 120 hours a week and staying up all night to get things done, you'll boast about it. But when cynicism's eating away at you, do you brag about

that? No, you don't."

Christina explains that, of the thousands of people she has interviewed on the subject, many describe it as 'an erosion of the soul'. "They end up trying to get by in their job by doing the bare minimum – cutting corners and becoming less engaged," she says. "This can also lead to a very negative response to yourself: 'Why am I here? I'm not confident enough. I'm always making mistakes.' It can easily lead to depression and other kinds of mental-health problems."

Liz agrees that burnout made her feel like a completely different person. "I'm usually happy; someone who enjoys people and is proud of her work," she says. "But burnout has turned me into someone else. I'm angry and resentful, and have no tolerance when people screw up. I've stopped exercising and live off junk food.

"I'm permanently exhausted and sometimes lash out. I once told a colleague her lack of effort was making the whole team look shit, and when she got upset I just didn't care – I didn't feel as if I had the mental or emotional capacity to deal with it."

Eventually, Liz developed bronchitis and a UTI, which had been caused by her diet of coffee and the fact that she only took time for a bathroom break once a day. But even then, she didn't feel she could stop: "My boss's attitude was, 'We're all feeling rubbish, we just have to push through it."

RUNNING OUT OF TIME

We're all busy: a *Cosmopolitan* survey of more than 750 women reveals 59% of us obsess over work while off the clock, and 44% of us check our work emails every day outside office hours,

including at weekends.

But these burdens are not just leaving us fed-up and exhausted – most of us have learnt to live with that after the hard years of the recession. We're also showing classic signs of burnout: more than three quarters of those surveyed regularly feel a lack of motivation, 82%

experience negative emotions and 71% feel dissatisfied with life.

Plus, experts warn, anyone can be at risk. "In the past, burnout happened in jobs that involved working with people – occupations such as teaching, social work or nursing – but now it has expanded beyond the caring professions," explains Sir Cary Cooper, a professor of organisational psychology and health at Manchester Business School, who has been studying burnout for more than 30 years. "The pace of life, work overload, job insecurity and increasingly high."





ARE YOU HEADING FOR BURNOUT?

For each item, asses how your current work situation compares with your ideal, and rate it accordingly: It's just right (A); a mismatch (B), or a major mismatch (C).

WORKLOAD

The amount of work I have to complete in a day
The frequency of unexpected additions to my workload

CONTROL

My participation in decisions that affect my work

The quality of leadership

REWARD

Recognition for achievements from my supervisor Opportunities for rises/bonuses

COMMUNITY

The frequency of supportive interactions at work
The closeness of personal friendships at work

FAIRNESS

Management's devotion to equal consideration of employees
Clear and open procedures for rewards and promotions

VALUES

The potential of my work to contribute to society ____ My confidence that the company's mission is meaningful ____

All 'A's? You've found an excellent place to work. A few 'B's are not surprising, and people are usually able to tolerate them. A lot of 'B's and 'C's – especially major ones in areas that are important to you – signify a potentially intolerable situation.

Don't let your workplace make you a shadow of your former self

'Japan has a word for "death by overwork" expectations of us mean more and more people are becoming burnt out."

A worrying number of you are experiencing extreme symptoms: 40% have sought medical help because of stress or anxiety, and 71% have experienced an anxiety or panic attack. But although these are clear indicators that something's wrong, the initial cues can be a lot more subtle, often only obvious to your closest friends and colleagues. "Behavioural changes are the first warning sign – for example, if you were previously sociable you might become withdrawn; you might be less cooperative or more aggressive; and your sense of humour might wane," says Sir Cary. "Physical signs depend on the person. You may get more colds, smoke or drink more, eat more or less, or suffer gastrointestinal problems."

THIRD-DEGREE BURNOUT

And it doesn't stop there: it's thought burnout could even kill. In Japan, they have a word for 'death by overwork': *karōshi*. Official reports show this as the cause of death for around 400 Japanese workers per year, citing stress-related heart disease, stroke and suicide.

'Where would be the best place to stand on the train platform... just in case I decided to jump?' That's what 30-yearold HR executive Leeanne Graham found herself thinking one morning on her daily commute to work.

She wasn't sure when the thoughts started, but she did know work had gone from being something she loved to a place where she shoved papers to the back of her drawer because she just couldn't face dealing with them. "If I couldn't see them they didn't exist," she says. "I knew my colleagues would have to take up the slack, so I lay awake every night worrying. If I took annual leave, I'd be terrified of being found out – but even that didn't make me do the work. It was like a brick wall I couldn't get over."

Leeanne realised she'd hit burnout when she found herself thinking about

suicide. "That morning, after just three hours' sleep, I reached rock bottom. I didn't believe anyone would care if I went through with it – although, of course, that wasn't true. It didn't help that underneath my mask of normality I'd distanced myself from my colleagues – I was oversensitive and had negative feelings towards people I used to get on with. I made it into

work, and although I was worried about losing my job, I went straight to my manager and broke down. I knew I couldn't carry on without help."

She was referred for counselling by her employer and used those honest conversations to take stock of her career. "I asked myself, 'Do I want to be happy, successful?' And I realised it just wasn't happening in my HR role," she says. "I resigned without a job to go to, started temping and felt better immediately."

"Burnout is about resentment," Yahoo's president and CEO Marissa Mayer famously said back when she worked at Google, logging 130 hours a week and sleeping at her desk. It's one of the reasons why many of the tech giants provide so many perks for employees.

At Yahoo, speakers such as Tom Cruise and Deepak Chopra are invited to give motivational speeches to staff, while barbecues and private concerts from the likes of Taylor Swift are also part of the company's 'give back' ethos – on top of transport to and from work, sleep pods and basketball courts for letting off steam. In addition to free food and drink, Google offers staff legal advice, on-site medical services, travel insurance, extra time off and spending money for new parents, and tuition reimbursement of around £7,800. And this year, Facebook and Apple started offering female employees assistance with egg freezing. The message is clear: we'll work you hard, but we'll give you

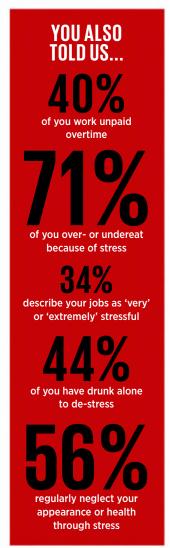
enough support so that resentment won't ever sink in.

THE REMEDY

Most of us would be lucky to find that level of inclusivity and trust in a relationship, let alone in an employer. So how can you protect yourself from burnout? "Find out how it's going for colleagues you trust," savs Christina. "If you're the only one with a problem, maybe you should move on. But if others are struggling with the same issues, work out how to change things."

Generation Y, who have been raised on digital nomadism, flexibility and multitasking, should be less susceptible to hitting the wall: "Millennials will cope better than those of us over 40, as they know jobs aren't for life; they're better at adapting," Sir Cary says.

Although Liz's job is improving, she's seriously considering her future. "I'm fed up of having to say, 'Sorry for being such a bitch,' and having to work through bronchitis was a crisis point," she says. "It might be time to move on. Even if things get better, what I've suffered is hard to forgive." •



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SETTLED? WE'VE GOT YOU SINGLE? COVERED

The collole who resting the solution of the so

Splite in the state of the stat despites increase after, chow together, that's according to a new US study that found that was a full meal. Going through a rough patch? Keep a stack of crudités on hand thou who tempting. Clessific watching after a rant with a loved one. Researchers studied 43 couples in long the more likely to reach for crunchy, highly textured food (you know, so you coupled as loved to tempting the more likely to reach for crunchy, highly textured food (you know, so you coupled to tempting the more likely the mo Studies show eaten a full meal. Going through a rough patch? Keep a stack of crudités on hand-and the less healthy option of crisps would be all too tempting... Dresence of the show that we're mover dinner, and found that those who bickered ien when any or and the less healthy option of crisps would be all too tempting...



'I always compared other men to him'

Lily Dodwell-Hill, 24, is a PR executive from London

Beetle (nobody calls him by his real name, not even his mum) went to the all-boys school in our home town of Shrewsbury, and I went to the girls? I knew of him, but it wasn't until a mutual friend's party (I was 17 and he was 16) that we met. He was tall, and so am I (nearly 5ft 11ins) so I thought, 'Great, someone taller than me!' We kissed that night, and soon after, we became official.

I told Beetle I loved him on a beach in Wales. He laughed and said it back. He was a joker – never really romantic. I think he found it hard to be open about his feelings.

We were solid for three years, but just before we went to university, we realised we were leaving our small-town lives for something bigger, and breaking up made sense. I threw myself into university life, meeting lots of new people, and didn't think much about Beetle. But, looking back, I always compared other men to him. I prefer it if guys take the piss out of me a bit instead of paying compliments – I guess because that's what Beetle used to do.

I was intrigued to see him again after all this time. After a little awkwardness, we were back to our old banter – him asking where he should get his new tattoo; me joking, "Somewhere it can't be seen?" He didn't look different, but it was weird seeing him in a suit – he used to be quite scruffy! I was surprised to hear he's writing a book too. At school he

was never that driven; *I* was the nerd. But he was clever and curious, and I still look for that in a boyfriend.

I didn't expect there to be romantic feelings – and there weren't, but it's good to know we're still good friends.

Would you see him again?

100%. We've already talked about going for another drink together. But this time on a Friday night, rather than in the middle of the week, so we can stay out a bit longer.









'I didn't have time to feel heartbroken'

Beetle Holloway, 24, is an account executive from London

I first met Lily at a house party. Initially, I chatted to her because I wanted one of her cigarettes, but we quickly bonded over our shared sense of humour and ended the night with a kiss. A few days later I asked her out, and it blossomed from there.

That summer, Lily became my best friend, as well as my girlfriend. I remember my mates teasing me, saying, "You've got a girlfriend!" In the early days I'd deny it, but in my head I thought, 'Yeah, I guess I have!'

Lily was my first serious relationship, and I did love her. I still don't really know how to describe what love is, but even then I knew I felt more for Lily than I had for anyone else.

I've never regretted splitting up, and I doubt she has either – it was really amicable. Neither of us wanted a relationship holding us back from new experiences, and I was so excited about university, I didn't have time to feel heartbroken.

When Lily got in touch, I was nervous, but we were always up for doing silly things, so I thought, 'Fuck it, why not?'

After 10 minutes spent awkwardly reading the menu, chat flowed. And people at the table next to us started singing *Karma Chameleon*, which gave us something to laugh about!

Lily's more mature now (although she was always more grown-up than me), but her sense of humour is exactly as I remembered. It was nice catching up, but there's no spark

anymore, and that's OK. The night confirmed what I already thought: that we still work – but just as friends.

* Would you like to be reunited with your first love? Email us at first.love@ cosmopolitan.co.uk.

Would you see her again?

Despite having had her number in my phone for years, before this I never would've messaged Lily to ask whether she fancied a drink. I like to think I would now.

This month we'll be

-Cosmopolitan's LAURA CAPON is feeling festive





OK, so we're approaching our thirties, but my friends and I are still Harry fans, and *nobody* could resist Christmas at Hogwarts. The Warner Bros Studio Tour in Hertfordshire, home of all things Potter, is hosting

celebrations in the Great Hall on 3 December, serving festive food inspired by the films (though presumably no magical chocolate frogs). Tickets have sold out, but I'll be poring over the pictures on Instagram and adding tickets for 2016 to my Christmas list...



My friends and I love Christmas - even an epic Topshop sale couldn't persuade us to miss the switching on of the Regent Street lights. With everyone leaving London to see their families, we always arrange our own early Christmas celebration. We enjoy a glass of Baileys while swapping presents

- I have mine over ice, but if there's a nip outside (or snow if we're lucky), I'll add some to a festive hot chocolate. Yum!

* Make your own head to Cosmopolitan. co.uk/baileys for the recipe.



Channelling our inner Mariah

I won't hear a word against it: Christmas music is amazing. It's just a shame there's such a small window of opportunity to crank up the Noddy Holder. I dig out my Christmas playlist on 1 November (sorry, team Cosmopolitan), and there's nothing better than singing your heart out to Mariah. Wham! and East 17 with your mates.



Counting down the days

A picture of baby Jesus or a wonky chocolate (is it a bell? A shoe?) was about as good as Advent calendars got when I was a kid. But these days, they're a lot more interesting. We all have an unhealthy obsession with Charlotte Tilbury's makeup line, so when we heard she was releasing a calendar with seriously covetable products behind each window, we got very excited. The Book Of Make Up Magic contains some of the brand's best-selling products in travel - and regular - sizes. Although, at £150, I doubt my nan will be sending me one in the post.



Hunting for the best yule log

Forget Christmas pud – for us, it's all about the yule log. Every year we try to find the best one, but they never seem to have quite enough chocolate on them. So, I'm planning on making my own this year, and maybe I'll even add a dash of Baileys. Mary Berry, eat your heart out.



BEST SEX EVER WAS...

with a woman

You're straight. One day you bump into an old female friend. What happens next? Becy, 21, explains

What was going through my mind as my friend Sarah* slid her hand from my breasts, down my stomach and under the band of my knickers? The unkempt state of my pubic hair? Sarah didn't notice, and as her fingers found my clitoris, neither did I.

This wasn't how I expected a few after-work drinks on a Thursday night to end. Tipsy and in bed, perhaps. With Sarah, absolutely not.

Getting off the train, I fancied a drink so texted around, and when no one was free I thought of Sarah. We'd been friends in school, but despite bumping into each other a few times since and promising to 'catch up', it hadn't happened. I dropped her a text and an hour later, we were in my local. I told her about my new job as a blog writer and that I was recently out of a sexless relationship. We were getting on so well at 11PM, two bottles of wine in, that we took another to my house.

Once we'd finished drinking and talking about the camping trips we'd gone on as kids, it was 1AM. I said she should stay over in my bed – just like we used to. I lent her a T-shirt and we climbed under the sheets. We drifted off, but I soon woke up as Sarah had

rolled on to my long hair. I leant over to lift her off, but as I did, she stirred. "Sorry," I whispered, hovering over her. I slid back down on my pillow, but Sarah rolled over to face me and started to talk. Then, she kissed me.

Her lips were soft and delicate. I can't lie, it felt great; as her tongue slipped in and out of my mouth,

I could feel myself getting wetter than I had in years. Even so, I couldn't shake off the weirdness of who I was kissing. Sarah had never come out as gay, but I'd often wondered if she might be. And now her hands were sliding up and down my body, rubbing my breasts – over my T-shirt, then under. I don't let men touch me like that; I'm self-

conscious of my small boobs – but I felt comfortable with Sarah.

Still kissing, she ran her hands all over my body, and seemed to know where to touch, as though she'd done it before. Whether she had, I didn't know. I followed her lead. I'd kissed a girl in college, but never gone this far. Then, her hands moved inside my knickers. Her fingers rested on my

clitoris – and she began to rub. I hadn't had sex in a year – I'd almost forgotten how great it felt to be touched. I didn't take long to come.

She changed her focus, kissing my body – heading south. By the time she reached my thighs I thought the slightest pressure on my clitoris would make me come again. But she had me

under her control, teasing me and building up the tension. Finally, she pushed me over the edge... After I climaxed again, I realised it was 2AM. "I've got to be up in four hours," I said. "Go to sleep," Sarah replied. "Return the favour in the morning."

"I will," I said – and meant it. But the next morning I woke up late

for work and my promise vanished. We dressed and I called a taxi.

I didn't text Sarah and she didn't text me. It's been eight months and we still haven't spoken. I'm now back together with an old boyfriend.

It hurts to know I've lost Sarah, but I don't regret what happened. It was an amazing experience. I'm just one emergency drinking buddy down.

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Because sometimes life is stranger than fiction SSIONS



At a festival, I turned around to check my mates were still behind me, but tripped, stumbled and fell into a nearby buggy – landing on top of a baby! Thankfully, the child was OK, but his dad was distinctly unimpressed and gave me a cold, hard stare like I was pure evil as I walked away in shame.

QUINCY, 25,

PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT, LONDON

LOST IN TRANSLATION

When I moved to London from Bulgaria five years ago, I learnt English by watching US movies and TV shows. So for ages whenever someone said, 'You alright?', instead of a greeting, I thought it meant something was up with my appearance. I'd stand there looking bewildered, trying to find a stain on my shirt or getting out my mirror to check for smudged lipstick...

LUBKA, 33,

FASHION BLOGGER, LONDON



(NOT) DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

My friend said she'd found her dream wedding dress, so I went with her for a fitting. While she changed, I saw a hideous, meringue-type gown and tried it on for a laugh. I shouted across the fitting room, "I'm trying on the world's ugliest dress!" The laughter stopped when we emerged wearing identical dresses.

RAHKI, 23, FASHION MARKETING ASSISTANT, ESSEX

WORDS FAIL ME

I decided enough was enough with my ex, and to make sure he got the message, I left a T-shirt on his doorstep with the words 'You're dumped' printed on it. It didn't quite have the desired effect – he later texted, 'Thanks for the shirt, wore it to squash.'

SALLY-ANN, 40, DIRECTOR, WORCS



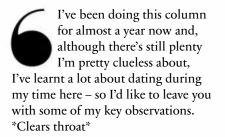
FEELING FLASHY

AFTER REACHING THE TOP OF AN ESCALATOR, A SWEET OLD LADY TAPPED ME ON THE SHOULDER AND SAID, "EXCUSE ME, EVERYBODY CAN SEE RIGHT UP YOUR DRESS. JUST THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW." I KNEW MY OUTFIT WAS SHORT, BUT DIDN'T REALISE IT WAS SO SHORT I WAS SHOWING PENSIONERS MY GOODS...

DANIELLA, 24, PAYROLL AND ACCOUNTS MANAGER. ESSEX

Sex and the single girl Breaking up is hard

In her final column, LAUREN FRANKLIN looks back on the love lessons she's learnt



You might know that you're a stone-cold catch, but there are some men out there who will keep you on the sidelines just in case plan A falls through. Be wary of the man who texts you just enough keep you interested, but not enough to fully commit. (Big shout out to Tom here.)

'Don't ever overlook a man who has the ability to make you laugh'

Never underestimate or overlook a man who has the ability to make you laugh.

Men who judge you on how O long you wait to have sex are bad news. Men who look down on you for doing it on a first date are even worse news. And as for men who pressure you into having sex with them before you're ready... they're called arseholes.

There's a fine line between persistence and desperation. Persistent men call you even if you don't call back. Desperate men try your mum instead.

Tinder is nothing more than a workout for your index finger. And frankly, there are better things to be doing with that.

> Men who make you cry may not be worth your tears but god, it's hard to let them go. And that's OK. Sometimes, no matter what your brain and your friends tell you, your heart just can't give up. But do try - real love doesn't involve tears, insecurity and the wrong kind of sleepless nights.

Accept it if you have a type. There have been times I've dated off-piste in the hope that attraction will grow. It never works, but it's fine to know what you like in a person and search for just that.

Q ... although there's no sweeter O feeling than the overwhelming (and sudden) realisation you've fallen for someone you never expected to.



Finally, remember life itself is romantic – *without* being in love with someone. It can feel pretty exciting not knowing how your path is mapped out. Just arm yourself with satnay, a good vibrator and the faith that, in the end, all will be fine.

Are you our next Sex And The Single Girl?

Ever read this column and thought, ' have a crazy sex life and am willing to share those details with Cosmopolitan for the good of womankind'? If so, this column could be yours. If you're totally honest, upfront and funny and a UK resident aged 18 or over, you could soon be reporting for us from the front line of modern dating. Terms and conditions apply: for full details, and to enter, head to Cosmopolitan.co.uk/ column and tell us in no more than 200 words why you'd like to be considered, then regale us with your (single) most memorable sex and relationship





WORST DATES EVER

We've all been there...



He pulled out his phone and started showing me all the other girls on OkCupid he was talking to, telling me that if we didn't work out, he needed a plan B. Needless to say, we didn't make it.

AMANDA, 24



When I was mid-sentence, he interrupted me and said, "Sometimes when you're talking, it's really annoying, so I just zone out and focus on how pretty you are."

SARA, 21



HE SPENT 20 MINUTES
DESCRIBING HOW
GROSS ANOTHER GIRL
SMELT... DOWN THERE.

ANNA, 27



HE AWKWARDLY KISSED ME, LOOKED DOWN AT HIS CROTCH, AND SAID, "IT'S NOT JUST THE PLEATS, I'M VERY AROUSED RIGHT NOW!"

ALLISON, 33



He assumed that, because I'm Asian, I loved sushi and anime and could read his Japanese tattoos. When I told him I'm Chinese, he said, "Chinese, Japanese it's all the same."

SHIRLEY, 22



I went for dinner with a guy who was over a foot taller than me. Before we could order he said, "You're cute, but it's not going to work out. I have a huge penis and small girls can't handle it."

LISA, 29





On our first date, we sat in his car, where he proceeded to scream at me for not putting enough effort into our 'relationship'.

JESSICA, 30

AFTER DINNER, HE PEED
IN THE CAR PARK BECAUSE
HE DIDN'T WANT TO GO BACK
INTO THE RESTAURANT
TO USE THE LOO.

ABBY, 25

FERAL FACTOR



SNAKE IN THE GRASS



LOVE RAT



DIRTY DOG



TOTAL PIG

SEXUAL HEALING



l aist

No topic is too taboo for Cosmopolitan's sex psychotherapist RACHEL MORRIS

Why can't I orgasm with him?

After being single for five years, I've met someone (at last!). I'm really happy – but I seem to have completely lost my ability to orgasm in front of someone. I'm still fine on my own but I don't even get close when we're together. What's going on?

It's not surprising your orgasm has had an attack of shyness, considering it hasn't had an audience for several years. Performance anxiety increases under pressure, so demanding it makes an appearance will only exacerbate the problem. Give yourself time to build a new rapport with your body as regards the newcomer, and establish a new set of expectations. I know it's been a long time coming and you're excited and want everything to be perfect all at once, but you're hurrying the best bits. Slow things down and have a little faith. Think of it as an exciting milestone on the horizon to work towards together.



What's wrong with my vagina?

Over the past year, intercourse has become increasingly painful. Foreplay helps me relax, but as soon as my boyfriend tries to enter me, I seem to clench up tight. I've read about vaginismus online, but I'm 30 with no history of abuse, so it can't be that – can it?

Vaginismus is a psychological condition with very real physiological symptoms. It's an involuntary stress response, which any woman can experience at any age, whatever their sexual history. That's involuntary, meaning it's out of your control, so you can't stop it. Stress is often a factor, although identifying the underlying cause might require professional investigation with a therapist. I believe vaginismus is a control issue; when we ignore our own needs for too long, our bodies go into lockdown until we address the situation. If your body could talk, what would it say? Listen carefully and act.

HE WANTS TO KNOW

I fancy my half-sister

I was contacted by a half-sister I never even knew existed. We clicked, and when we met up the sexual chemistry was amazing. We've only kissed, but we both want more. Just how wrong is this?

It's not for me to judge you, but a sexual relationship between halfsiblings is seen by law as incest and can lead to prison. It's not unusual for relatives who meet as adults to feel intimately connected, and those intense feelings can be interpreted as romantic or sexual attraction. These feelings will likely pass; my advice is that you let them, rather than take a risky path.

My new man has no libido

I'm in a new relationship after a long dry spell. We're in love, but I'm frustrated with the lack of passion. His medication makes him tired and interferes with his libido, whereas I want sex all the time! I know it's not his fault, but his rejections make me feel insecure.

If you're sure it's all down to his meds, why take it personally? And in light of what you know about his current sexual status, why make advances for him to reject? Is it the sex you can't live without or the reassurance it gives you? If the latter, then the insecurity you're feeling could have more to do with low self-esteem than a high libido. This could be the perfect opportunity for you to develop your confidence outside the bedroom. Use this time together to deepen intimacy in other ways – talking, touching and kissing. It was all the rage in the olden days.

Have a question for Rachel?

Email rachel@cosmopolitan.co.uk

thin this fight think sames room whit

See you at breakfast

RASPBERRIES

SEEDS ...

POMEGRANATE

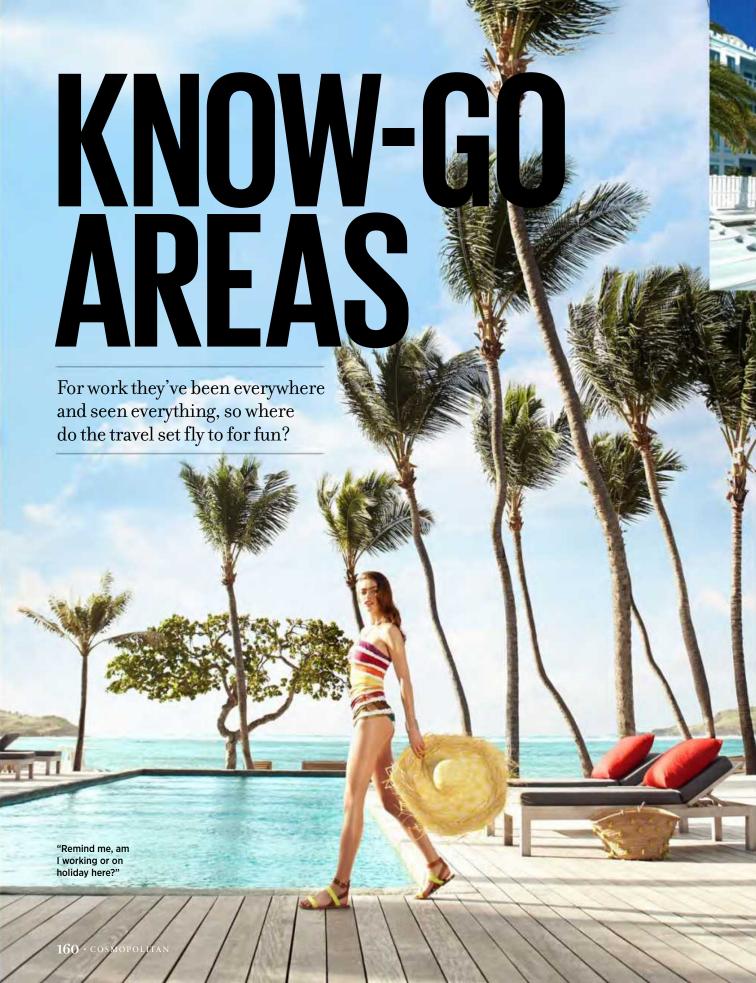
NEW Special K Super Porridge LIVE IN COLOUR





MEET MR NICE FRY...

The beloved avocado is surely the most Instagrammed fruit in your newsfeed right now. But if you're a bit over uploading smashed-avo-on-toast at your local brunch spot, here's a filter-friendly alternative: avocado fries. Hot on the heels of sweet potato and courgette chips, the avocado fry (a slice of avocado in a breadcrumb coating, baked at 200°C for 15 mins) is set to become the staple of health-conscious gourmets the world over, after making its debut at SXSW, the foodie-focused festival in Austin, Texas (loved by Jessica Alba and Olivia Wilde). And because the fibre-rich wedges are full of healthy fats, antioxidants and potassium, we're saying you can have seconds.



Play



Bonnie Rakhit FOUNDER AND EDITOR OF THESTYLE TRAVELLER.COM

Go on, where's your secret favourite? I have two. The Grace

Hotel in Santorini is the stuff of fantasy. Its whitewashed rooms, built into the side of a sun-drenched cliff, overlook a volcano submerged in the sea. Champagne's on tap – have it in your own Jacuzzi or from the hotel's breathtaking infinity pool. I also love Palais Namaskar in Marrakech. The views, decor, service and food are flawless – and all with the Atlas Mountains as a backdrop.

What if you're adventurous but not minted? Go to Thailand. Once you've paid for the flights, everything else is a bargain. A three-course meal of fresh fish and lobster with a beachside view costs less than a fiver, and you'll find bargain beach huts – quaint, clean and for as little as £20 a night. I like the Sai Thong Resort in Koh Tao (from £12pn) and the languid Relax Bay Resort in Koh Lanta (from £19pn).

And to impress your friends with somewhere special? I love Mexican food *and* a party atmosphere, so Bodega Negra in New York is my

favourite restaurant. It serves delicious and healthy ceviches, tacos and tostadas washed down with the best margaritas in town. It's filled with NYC's celebrity and fashion crowd, making it one of the coolest venues in town. Last time I visited its sister restaurant in London during Fashion Week, Kanye West did an impromptu DJ set.

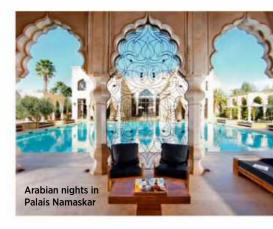
What if you could only go to one place for the rest of your life?

I'll never tire of Ibiza for its party

atmosphere and wellbeing vibe – I've been 21 times. Watch the sun set from the gorgeous Experimental Beach cocktail bar, or you can hire a yacht and go to Formentera for the day (it's not as expensive as you'd

think if there's a group of you). Stay at party hotel Es Vivé or chill out at countryside spa Atzaró. Sheer bliss.

What's in your hand luggage? A chic black maxidress in super-comfortable jersey that looks great by day at the



pool, or with jewellery and heels in the evening. I always have a bikini in my hand luggage, so if my hotel room isn't ready I can chill by the pool. And my retro cream Olympus Pen Generation camera looks so chic, it's an accessory in its own right.

Where next? Island-hopping in the Caribbean. In Anguilla – a hidden-gem island with spectacular white beaches – I'll stay at the exclusive Viceroy hotel. Next up, billionaire playground St Barths, where I won't miss a visit to the Bond-style Eden Rock hotel.



Daisy Bird FOUNDER OF BIRD TRAVEL PR

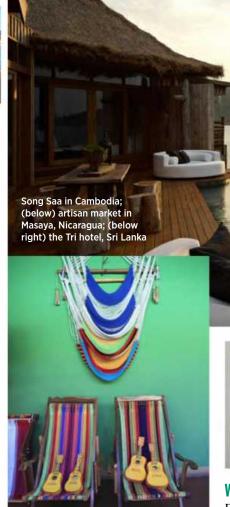


Go on, where's your secret favourite? Song Saa in Cambodia, a chic island eco-resort with 27 beautifully and sustainably designed ocean-front villas. The staff spoil you endlessly, but you still feel like a pioneer discovering virgin rainforest and lively fishing villages nearby.

What if you're adventurous but not minted? Lamu Island in Kenya. Stay at Fatuma's Tower (from £68pn) run by Englishman Gillies, who still teaches yoga at 70 and tells tales of African witchcraft on sunrise walks through the dunes. You can't help but be seduced by the charm of Lamu and its soulful people. Hop on a dhow to Manda Bay for lobster at a beach-shack restaurant for a song, then sundowners at flask-pack hangout Peponi. You'll still have spending money for Masai trinkets at the markets.

And to impress your friends with somewhere special? Head to the Croatian island of St Klement for a long, indulgent lunch at Zori – the





seaside setting is magical and it serves the most exquisite food in Croatia. I dream of its feast of fresh oysters, scallops, truffle risotto and wines from the local islands.

What if you could only go to one place for the rest of your life?

Sri Lanka – the area around Galle on the south-west coast. I love beach life, but never underestimate Sri Lanka's jewel-like interior. Stray inland a little off the coastal road and suddenly you're amid cinnamon plantations and paddy fields, with views even more beautiful than the ocean. And you can still hop in a tuktuk and be back at the beach in minutes. Book a glass-fronted suite at new boutique hotel Tri, overlooking stunning Lake Koggala.



Eddie Harrop Voyager bag in soft but sturdy leather is perfect as hand luggage, but roomy enough for long weekends. It's getting better with age! And Yolke does a great range of silk stretch loungewear that's stylish yet comfy enough to snooze in next to clients on overnight flights.

Where next? I've got the Latin bug again – I'm longing to go back to Brazil and Nicaragua...



Juliet Kinsman FOUNDING EDITOR OF BOUTIQUE AND LUXURY HOTEL SPECIALIST MR & MRS SMITH

Go on, where's your secret favourite? Jade Mountain in St Lucia. This hillside Caribbean resort has ozone-cleansed infinity pools and open-sided bedrooms, which means there's nothing between you and that warm air and stunning landscape. At night you lie in your four-poster bed lulled by the chirruping tree frogs and the sea breeze.

What if you're adventurous but not minted? Head for boho boutique hotel Brody House in Budapest (from £50pn). It's the dream base for a culture-packed weekend that feels extravagant even on a budget. I love it so much, I got married at Brody Studios there. A gypsy band, too many cocktails and lots of dancing. Perfect.

And to impress your friends with somewhere special?

New York for cocktails – Attaboy is my favourite, a secret candlelit speakeasy in the Lower East Side where they customise your cocktail

(you knock on the door, but there's no guarantee you'll get in!). And I love Duck Laundry at Lux Belle Mare in Mauritius, where you can watch the chefs making your dim sum.

What if you could only go to one place for the rest of your life?

New York for its energy. I recently stayed in the most amazing Airbnb

in Brooklyn – Bell End in Clinton Hill – a three-bedroom house in converted stables with original beams.

What's in your hand luggage? I can't

leave home without sunglasses and my iPhone, since I'm an Instagram addict (@julietkinsman). On flights, my cashmere Travelwrap is a godsend when it gets chilly, and Lucas Papaw lipbalm stops my skin drying out, plus it works on sunburn and rashes.

Where next? Sri Lanka! I'll be there for a month to help a friend set up Breath of Life Sanctuary, a yoga retreat and wildlife sanctuary near Tangalle.

Wrap, The Travel Wrap

Papaw, Sunglasses, Taylor Morris Eyewear

Company, Lipbalm, Lucas





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MACARONI CHEESE



There's macaroni cheese and then there's a Tom Aikens macaroni cheese – and this is as amazing as you'd expect from the Michelinstarred chef, who now boasts his

own range of Tom's Kitchen restaurants across London. Perfectly crisp on top, deliciously unctuous below, his take on this comfort-food classic requires little more than 30 minutes of your time – and a big appetite.

INGREDIENTS

- * 250g macaroni
- * 600ml milk
- * 6g fresh thyme
- * 2 bay leaves
- * 45g butter
- * 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- * 50g flour
- * 50g Gruyère cheese
- * 30g Parmesan cheese
- * 20g Dijon mustard
- * 15 basil leaves, ripped

METHOD (SERVES 4)

1. Cook the macaroni, then strain and refresh under cold water. Place the milk in a pan over a low-medium heat, add the thyme and bay leaves, and infuse for 10 mins.

2. Meanwhile, gently cook the butter and garlic in a pan for 2-3 mins; add flour and stir constantly for 2-3 mins. Gradually add the milk, mixing in well before adding more. Simmer for 2 mins, season, and add the cheese and mustard.

3. Mix the sauce with the pasta and basil, put in an ovenproof dish and bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for 20 mins. Serve immediately.



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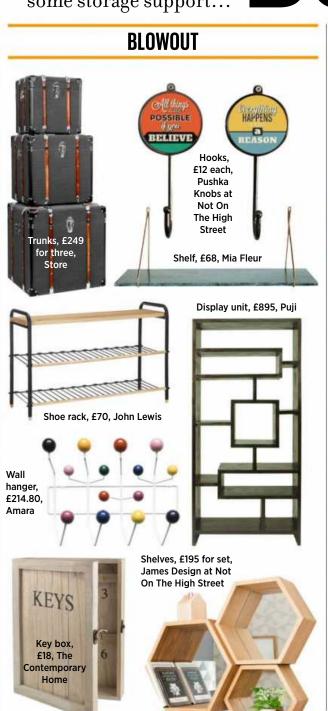
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Play

)ESIG **UBLES** If your home's currently sporting the 'ransacked' look, it's time to call in some storage support...





BUDGET



recipe (opposite).

The childhood reverter

Christmas is a time for kids. And for adults who, the second they set foot in their parents' house, revert to their former foot-stamping entitled selves. Even though The Reverter is a fully fledged grown-up, she sees nothing wrong in emptying the fridge without contributing a penny, having a nap while the 'adults' wash up and insisting on watching Frozen when everyone else wants to see Sherlock.

Most likely to be seen: Sulking because there was no Chocolate Orange in her stocking. Least likely to be seen: Offering to buy the tree, cooking Christmas dinner, clearing up the wrapping paper littering the living room... In short, anything she didn't have to do when she was nine years old.

Most used phrase: "But I'm tired!" Favourite app: Sleeps To Christmas countdown app - because everyone's just a child at heart, right?

Favourite drink: Baileys hot chocolate* with marshmallow 'snow'. Somehow, she doesn't mind making her favourite Christmas drink

a little more adult...



The festive fanatic

The first glimpse of a snowflake motif on a box of supermarket crackers sends her into a frenzy. Her cupboards are immediately stuffed with mince pies (she's not worried that they go out of date before 25 anyway), and she enjoys nothing better than wandering around a garden centre, buying

Christmas pudding, giving it added sparkle with a drizzle of Baileys, while listening to

over ice - it really isn't Christmas without it.

The domestic goddess

This is it: her time to shine. She's spent all year adding festive ideas to her Pinterest board and honing her perfect crispy duck-fat potatoes - and now, at last, everyone will get



to admire her skills. She's invited the entire family, and can't wait to see their faces when she unveils her gingerbread house featuring icing-sugar fairy lights.

Most likely to be seen: Painstakingly writing personalised jokes for handmade crackers. Least likely to be seen: Buying Paxo stuffing. Most-used phrase: "Has anyone seen my selection of edible glitters?"

Favourite app: Merry Christmas Decoration Ideas. Its 20,000 images are still not enough. Favourite drink: Champagne - simple and classic, just like her colour-coordinated tree.

The fitness guru

Officially aghast at the overindulgence of the holidays, she secretly loves Christmas because the time off gives her the chance to get ahead with her fitness goals - while everyone else falls behind. She will let her hair down a little, of course: her Christmas Day run will just be a guick 5K.

Most likely to be seen: Uploading photos of prawns wrapped in lettuce to Instagram with the caption, 'Naughty Christmas treat!' Least likely to be seen: Opening a fresh packet of mince pies because although she could have sworn she only ate two, the first box appears to be empty.

Most-used phrase: "Do you know how many empty carbs there are in a stuffing ball?" Favourite app:

My Fitness Pal.

Favourite drink: Green tea, as usual.



YULE Love it can't resist a dash of Baileys Chocolat Luxe in a gooey



The Christmas Grinch

The mere sight of a bauble-strewn shop display before 24 December sends her apoplectic - didn't you know that Christmas is just a cynical marketing ploy? And anyway, Jesus was born in spring, actually. Other people's merry, Christmassy smiles send her deeper into an antifestivities grump. Bah humbug.

Most likely to be seen: Telling her relatives that, as an antidote to commercialism, she'll be donating money to charity instead of buying them presents.

Least likely to be seen: Wearing reindeer slippers, eating Quality Street and weeping through the end of It's A Wonderful Life.

Most-used phrase: "Scrooge had the right idea before those stupid ghosts came along and ruined everything."

Favourite app: Bulb Smash, 'the anti-Christmas game', offers the player festive scenes to brutally destroy at the swipe of a finger.

Favourite drink: A cup of tea. Anything that could potentially be made to feel festive is a total no-go.

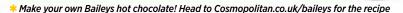
Flat white martini

INGREDIENTS:

- * 50ml Baileys Original Irish Cream
- * 25ml Smirnoff vodka
- * 25ml espresso
- * 3 coffee beans

METHOD:

- 1. Pop all ingredients into a cocktail shaker with ice.
- 2. Shake it up until everything is perfectly blended and the liquid is silky-smooth.
- **3.** Strain into a glass, garnish with the coffee beans and enjoy!



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STARS

Find out what the month has in store with Cosmopolitan's astrologer JESSICA ADAMS

Capricorn 22 DEC-19 JAN

From the final week of January, you can take a logical approach to a financial matter, or a situation that affects your assets. You're only interested in the facts and figures.

The big compromise from 2015 is over now.

Aquarius 20 JAN-18 FEB

You're viewing a situation involving a friend or group in a logical way, so why does it seem so complicated? Because of a cycle that only occurs every 29 years. Don't take on any new burdens until you've shed one you already hold.

Pisces 19 FEB-19 MAR

You're at the point of no return – you have to give up on a situation. Take this opportunity to launch yourself on a powerful new path. You saw what people with influence could do in 2015 – now harness that. Ditch any power trippers.

Aries 20 MAR-19 APR

People are paying attention to your image far more than usual now, so it's important to stay true to the look *you* feel suits you best. Use this as a platform to launch a major project that involves your name, face or shape for 2016.



Taurus 20 APR-20 MAY

Your financial life, including money, property or business, triggers all sorts of emotions; logic has very little to do with it. But work hard on solutions now and potential issues you'll face in June 2016 will be much easier.

Gemini 21 MAY-20 JUN

You're testing the boundaries of what's possible in terms of your money or property. You are pushing yourself, and the situation, to the limits. Keep changing this part of your life. You will be rewarded later.

Cancer 21 JUN-22 JUL

You have the chance to travel. You may also be able to get from A to B in a better way. Communication is opening up; a family member who takes regular journeys or lives far away is the key. Look outside the familiar places.

Leo 23 JUL-22 AUG

Radical changes affect the way you communicate. You have chosen a revolution in the way you travel; this will have results for you at Easter. For now, keep exploring, using the internet for access to the best car, plane or train options.

Virgo 23 AUG-22 SEP

Your family, home life or property interests were the centre of attention before Christmas. Other people's reactions still show you so much. Your emotional comfort zone is a real issue when it comes to property. Do what it takes.

Libra 23 SEP-22 OCT

A situation involving your home, family, property or flatmates creates extra adrenaline. You see big opportunities to do more, experience more, or have more on the home front. This is a change in the

This is a change in the balance of power – it works.

Scorpio 23 OCT-21 NOV

The world of children, babies, pregnancy, adoption or serious lovers matters more now. Work on an approach that helps you feel more secure. The chaos left over from 2015 is the result of confused thinking. It's time to get real.

Sagittarius 22 NOV-21 DEC

Your financial, business or property situation is on show. Everything about your lifestyle and security is on display. Others are watching and judging – this helps you. Take control and get your power back; you often lost it in 2015.

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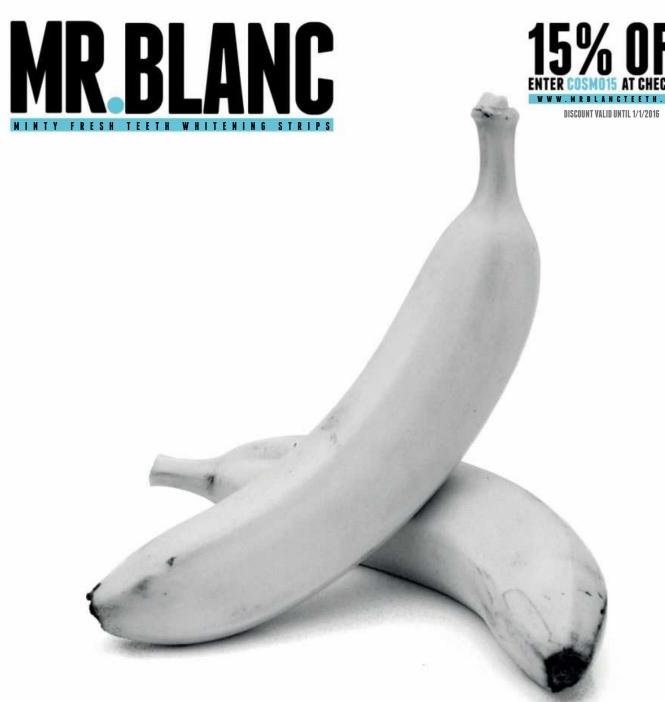
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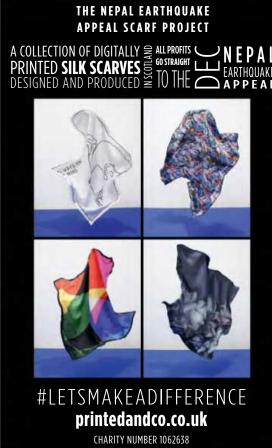








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THE HAIRCUT The Client will suffer a crisis of confidence upon seeing herself in the salon mirror with drowned-rat locks. As a result, she will refrain from saying anything when a shocking amount of hair starts falling into her lap. The Hairdresser must fill the silence with Small Talk, including the line, 'Going anywhere tonight?'

(the Client)

The Client accepts that she will leave the salon in one of the two following emotional states: A) Holding back her tears, scrunching her hair into a ponytail and vowing never to return there; B) Feeling vaguely frustrated that she wasn't brave enough to ask for something different, because her hair looks the same as it always does.

Signed:	(the Hairdresser

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The more they dance,

The more they build,

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